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THE SACRED HEART.

Anecdotes and Examples to Assist in Promot-
ing the Devotion to the
Sacred Heart.

FROM THE ORIGINAL OF

REV. DR. JOSEPH KELLER



NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO :
BENZIGER BROTHERS,
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Archbishop of New York.

New York, March 9, 1899.



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PREFACE.

DEVOTION to the Sacred Heart of Jesus consists in honoring His human Heart. This devotion is as old as the Church herself, for it began on Calvary when the soldier's lance pierced the sacred side of our dear Lord.

To say that by devotion to the Sacred Heart is simply meant honoring the love of Jesus, would be perfectly erroneous, inasmuch as by devotion to the Sacred Heart we desire not only to honor the love of Jesus for us, but also to pay special homage to that human Heart of flesh of our dear Lord, which, on account of its intimate union with the Godhead, as being the Heart of a God-man, is the living and unquenchable fountain-

head of every grace, and of the most heroic and amiable virtues.

Let us listen to the promises our dear Lord kindly made to the Blessed Margaret Mary, in favor of all those who practise and spread devotion to His Divine Heart.

1. I will give the grace necessary for their state.

2. I will give peace in their families.

3. I will comfort them in all their trials and afflictions.

4. I will be their secure refuge in life and death.

5. I will bestow abundant blessings on all their undertakings.

6. Sinners shall find My Heart an ocean of mercy.

7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.

8. Fervent souls shall advance rapidly towards perfection.

9. I will bless every dwelling in which an image of My Heart shall be exposed and honored.

10. I will give priests a peculiar faculty in converting the most hardened souls.

11. The persons who spread this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be effaced.

12. I will grant the grace of final perseverance to those who communicate on the first Friday of nine consecutive months.

The following anecdotes, selected from many others, clearly prove how faithfully these promises have been kept. May the perusal of this little book encourage all lovers of the Sacred Heart, both clergy and laity, to renew their confidence in this Divine Heart and their zeal in spreading devotion to it. In conclusion let us say to our dear Lord:

We humbly implore Thee, sweet Jesus, through that adorable Heart of Thine, which for our sakes was pierced by the soldier's lance, when

for three long hours Thou wast hanging with outstretched arms on the hard bed of the cross, to deign to bless this little book, and encourage all its readers to have recourse to this adorable Heart in all their necessities and to endeavor, for Thy greater honor and glory, to promote devotion to it.



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PART I.

ORIGIN OF THE PUBLIC DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

1.—**Father Eudes, the Founder of the Eudistes, a Precursor of the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.**

THE devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has had in the Church of God, like the coming of the Messiah in the Old Law, its prophets and precursors. In the Middle Ages, St. Mechtilde, St. Gertrude, later on Canisius and others, among whom the great missionary of Normandy, Father John Eudes, must not be forgotten.

This devout client of our blessed Lady, like St. Francis of Sales, who, when speaking of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, meant the love of Jesus, recognizes but one heart in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Although in the strictest sense of the word he cannot be called a precursor of the Blessed Margaret Mary, who, in the account of her life, written by herself in obedience to the orders of her superiors, declares it was Our Lord Himself who, from her very cradle, deigned to prepare her for her great mission, yet, as will be seen from what follows, we are as fully justified in calling him a precursor of this devotion, as we are in calling the Blessed Father de la Colombière its first apostle. It was he who first introduced the devotion to the heart of Our Lady, which he calls the dawn from which the devotion to the Sacred Heart emanates.

The Heart of the Son, is, according to him, contained in the heart of the Mother, and whilst the Heart of Jesus is placed prominently before the eyes of the world, let us turn to the heart of Mary, and beg of it to open itself, in order to give us the Heart of her Son. Whenever this great lover of Our Lady speaks in his writings of the devotion to her sacred heart, he never fails to point out how, in honoring the heart of the Mother, we are compelled to honor the Heart of her divine Son; for, although on the one hand, these hearts are materially separated from one another, on the other hand they are spiritually so closely united to each other that this separation must be considered as only exterior and accidental.

Towards the close of his life (A. D. 1672), writing to his brethren, Father Eudes clearly explains this theory: "It

has never been our intention for a moment to separate two things which God has so closely united together as the hearts of the Son of God and of His Blessed Mother." In a letter to another person, in the same year, he again says: "The hearts of Jesus and His Blessed Mother form together one heart, full of the most perfect love."

For this reason whatever Father Eudes and his sons have done in order to spread and encourage the devotion to the heart of Mary, must be considered as having also been done to promote the devotion to the Sacred Heart of her divine Son.

As far back as 1659 he composed a Mass and Hours in honor of the Sacred Heart, for which he obtained the required approbation and permission to publish it.

On October 20, 1672, the feast of the Sacred Heart was for the first time

publicly observed in all the chapels, seminaries and churches of the Eudistes, with the consent of the bishops, and from that time was considered one of the chief feasts of the congregation. Till then no such public celebration had ever been held, even by those professing the greatest love for this devotion.

2.—Brief Sketch of the Life of the Blessed Margaret Mary. Born July 22, 1647, at Lbaute=
cour; Died October 17,
1690, at Paray=le=
Monial.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has always existed since the very foundation of the Church. It began on Calvary when the Heart of our dear Redeemer was pierced through for our sakes. Truly it can be said that in the silent solitude of Ephesus,

Mary and the beloved disciple were the first clients of that adorable Heart, and no other creature, not even the angels or the greatest saints ever understood, as they did, all the anguish that Mary's heart suffered when the cruel lance pierced the side of Jesus. The records of the Church prove in the lives of the greatest saints how dear this devotion was to them. St. Bernard, in an ecstasy of love, exclaims: "How delightful it is to shut one's self up and make one's dwelling-place in the Heart of Jesus! Oh, what a treasure, what a priceless pearl is that Heart! Gladly would I sacrifice all to possess it. I will cry out with the prophets, I will pray in this temple and sanctuary, and praise the name of the Lord. I have found in the Heart of my Jesus, my King, my Brother, my Friend."

The seraphic Father St. Bonaventure, speaking of the wounds of Our

Lord, bursts forth into glowing strains of love: "Oh, loving wounds! through you have I entered into the innermost centre of the love of my Jesus; here will I take up my abode. . . . Oh, how great is the sweetness the soul enjoys when united to Thy Heart through these wounds! See, the gates of paradise are opened! The sword which barred them has been broken by the soldier's lance, and the treasury of eternal wisdom and love laid open; let us enter this Heart through these sacred wounds."

St. Thomas of Villanova continues in the same way: "The cooing turtle dove is the Church deprived of her Bridegroom. The nest of the sorrowful dove is the Heart of her Beloved, into which she enters by the wound in His side and finds rest and safety therein."

St. Francis de Sales also calls on Our Lady in his writings: "I implore thee to strengthen my soul, and all

who read my writings, through the Heart of Jesus."

St. Gertrude, St. Mechtilde, St. Catharine of Sienna experienced the greatest consolations when meditating on the devotion to the Sacred Heart. One day St. Catharine of Sienna asked Our Lord why He wished His side to be opened after His death, and He replied: "I wanted to reveal to men the secret of My Sacred Heart, to let them know that My love for them is greater than even the exterior signs of it, for while there was a limit to My sufferings, there is no limit to My love for them," and He added: "The pains of the senses are nothing in comparison to those of the soul."

This Divine Heart especially favored St. Gertrude, and enkindled in her whole being a burning love for this adorable Heart. The following, which is one of the most beautiful passages of her writings, clearly explains

the meaning of this devotion: "Added to the manifold graces Thou so lavishly bestowest on me in many different ways, Thou givest me that priceless token of Thy love and friendship, Thy adorable Heart, that glorious ark of the Godhead, that overflowing fountain of every delight, sometimes for naught, sometimes in exchange for my heart. Through this Divine Heart, Thou hast made manifest to me the most hidden secrets, imparted to me the purest pleasures, and hast honored me with the most marvellous caresses. My Lord and my God, I return to Thee what is Thine, and offer unto Thee my adorations and hymns of praise through this Divine Heart."

But God did not destine this beloved spouse, so burning with love for the Sacred Heart, to be the promoter of this devotion, which she herself declared was a last effort of love, reserved for the later ages of the world.

The middle of the seventeenth century was the time appointed by God to open this fountain of His mercy, in order to regenerate man, who, on account of his perverse ways, was on the verge of perdition. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the instrument chosen by Divine Providence to promote this devotion to the Sacred Heart, was a poor, obscure nun, living in the greatest retirement in one of the houses of the Visitation in France, but whose soul was filled with the most burning love for this adorable Heart. One day, whilst kneeling in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, she felt herself marvellously penetrated with the presence of God. Jesus appeared to her, and after allowing her to repose for some time in His divine bosom, He revealed to her the inexplicable mysteries of His adorable Heart, and said to her: "Look at My Heart, which is burning with so great a love for man,

and more especially for thee, that it can no longer contain itself, and is compelled through thy means to manifest itself to men, in order that they may enrich themselves with the treasures I long so ardently to give them; I reveal their great value to thee: they are the graces of sanctification and salvation, destined to snatch mankind from the abyss of perdition. I choose thee in spite of thy unworthiness and ignorance to be My agent, so that it may be quite clear that all is done by Me." After saying these words He took Margaret's heart, and on His plunging it into His own, it began to shine like an ocean of fire, and when He returned it to her it was quite bright. As a sign that this apparition was not the work of an overwrought imagination, He caused her ever afterwards to feel a sharp, acute pain in her left side.

Another time, when wrapt up in

prayer, she saw her divine Master, with His five wounds shining more brilliantly than the sun, His bosom seeming to be on fire. On opening it, to show Margaret His Heart, she perceived it was the source from which all this light emanated. He then explained to her all the marvels and excess of His love for men, and how their ingratitude had been the cause of all His sufferings. "If men," said He, "would only make Me some return for all I have done for them, I would gladly, were it possible, do still more, but they only repay My love by coldness and My tenderness by rejecting Me. Therefore, in order to atone in some measure for their ingratitude, try as far as lies in thy power to console Me." On Margaret laying all her weakness and incapacity to do so before Our Lord, He replied: "Behold, I give thee a superabundant means to supply for all that is wanting

in thee!" He then opened His Heart, out of which gushed forth flames of fire, which seemed to consume her heart with such an intensity of burning love that she implored her divine Master to take pity on her weakness, as she could not endure such a superabundance of graces. "Fear nothing," replied our dear Lord, "I will be thy strength; but listen to My voice in order to prepare thyself to fulfil My instructions." He then taught her the way to honor His Divine Heart. "Thou wilt receive holy communion on the first Friday of every month, to make reparation to Me. On the night between Thursday and Friday I will make thee participate in My sadness and agony in the Garden of Olives. Between the hours of eleven and twelve thou wilt prostrate thyself flat on thy face on the ground, and unite with Me in imploring the divine justice to have pity on poor sinners,

and thus mitigate the grief I felt at the faithlessness of My apostles."

The most wonderful of all these apparitions took place during the octave of Corpus Christi. Whilst Margaret Mary, kneeling in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, was, in the intensity of her love, thinking what was the best way to give herself entirely up to God, Our Lord, as if in answer to the longings of her heart, appeared and said to her: "Thou canst render Me no greater service than by doing what I have so repeatedly asked of thee." And showing His Sacred Heart, He added those sweet and consoling words, which have re-echoed throughout the whole Catholic world: "See that Heart which has so loved men, that it has spared itself nothing to prove its love to them, and the only return I receive from most of them is the basest ingratitude, in the sacrileges, irreverences, coldness and contempt I

meet with in this sacrament of My love. But what causes Me the greatest pain is the way I am treated by those consecrated to Me; for this reason I require of you to consecrate the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi to My Sacred Heart, by receiving holy communion and making a solemn act of reparation to atone for the insults it must receive whilst exposed on the altar. I also promise you My Heart will expand and pour down in rich abundance the stream of its love on all who will pay this homage to it." "But, my most gracious Lord," replied Margaret, "of whom dost Thou make use? Of me, a miserable sinner, whose unworthiness of itself is capable of its wasting Thy designs?"

"Do you not know," said her divine Master, "that I make use of the weak to put the strong to shame; that I usually manifest My light in its

greater glory to the lowly, the poor in spirit, to the one who attributes nothing to himself?"

Then Margaret, submitting herself to the decision of Our Lord, said: "Then give me the means to do what Thou commandest." Upon which Jesus said to her: "Apply to My servant; I desire him in My name to do all in his power to establish this devotion and not to be discouraged by the difficulties he may have to encounter, for he who distrusts himself, and places his whole trust in Me is all powerful."

Father de la Colombière was the priest chosen by God for this work, and had been for some time the spiritual director of the Blessed Margaret Mary. Besides being a man of rare spirituality, he was a son of St. Ignatius, and fitted in every respect to the task of being the strongest supporter of the holy nun. He recognized the spirit animating this humble

religious, and on her informing him of what had taken place during this last apparition, he determined to consecrate the 21st of June, 1675 (the day on which the first Friday after Corpus Christi fell that year) to honor the Sacred Heart, and ever afterwards observed the feast on that day. Shortly after this he was sent on a mission to England, but continued during his stay in that country his correspondence with Margaret. These two holy souls so closely united together, not only through their burning love for Jesus, but also through their unspeakable sufferings, consoled, taught, strengthened each other, as the spirit of God prompted them.

Our Lord, to prepare His saint for her great mission, not only wished her to sacrifice her love for Him on the altar of His Heart, but increased in her the power of suffering, so as to remove every stain from her heart, and

in this way accomplished in her the promises He had formerly made when He said: "Come and drink at the table of My bliss, in order to fortify yourself and enable you to act courageously, for the road is long and difficult, and you will be often obliged to pause and take breath and rest in My Sacred Heart. Take the cross I give you, My daughter, plant it in your heart, have it constantly before your eyes, carry it in your arms; it will make you suffer cruel torments—torments, which, though hidden from the world, will be your constant companion; a hunger without satisfaction, a thirst without refreshment, an unquenchable fire." Margaret, purified in the crucible of suffering, no longer belonged to herself, but was consumed with the desire to sink her own will entirely in God's. Her Lord and Master, in reply to these desires, ordered her to place herself completely at the

disposal and will of His Sacred Heart, by an heroic act of consecration. Margaret gladly obeyed, and signed the act with her own blood. This submission was rewarded by the divine Saviour making her the heir of all the treasures of His Sacred Heart, its beloved apostle, the plaything of its will and the holocaust of its love.

In the meantime Margaret had been appointed mistress of novices. This office is one of great responsibility, for the future welfare of the whole community greatly depends on the manner the mistress forms the spiritual character of those entrusted to her care. Margaret, who accepted this office with the greatest reluctance, and only at the express command of her divine Master, devoted all her energies to the work. She was in the novitiate what the artist is in his workshop. With unwearied love and the keen eye of an expert, she dived down

into the interior of the souls of the chosen spouses of Christ, which she fashioned and chiseled till she could clearly detect the likeness of God stamped in the most beautiful and manifold characters on each individual soul. God richly rewarded her trouble, for it was in this holy circle that the devotion to the Sacred Heart began. July 20, 1685, the feast of her patron saint, was the one chosen to honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The novices had secretly decorated an altar in the novitiate with flowers, and placed a small painted picture of the Sacred Heart above it. Filled with intense gratitude, Margaret fell on her knees and offered herself as a sacrifice to this Divine Heart, and consecrated herself and her novices to it. Her joy on this occasion was to be mingled with gall. As soon as what had taken place during this little feast became known to her community, voices rose up against

this new devotion, and Margaret found herself misunderstood, deserted, and persecuted by her sisters. Our Lord, however, consoled her by promising that it would be through affliction and persecution that the devotion to His Sacred Heart would be accepted.

This is precisely what happened. In the meantime the superioress of the convent at Semur-en-Auxois wrote to Margaret, begging that she and her community should join her in practising this devotion and likewise enclosed a picture of the Sacred Heart. In her letter Margaret, deeply touched at this, at once wrote back, saying: "This news has given me by far greater joy than all the riches in the world could have done."

But Our Lord seemed to take more delight in the sufferings than in the joy of His spouse, and asked her in what manner she would choose to

honor His Sacred Heart, whether through the happiness of the angels or through the cross.

Margaret chose the cross. She was again plunged into an ocean of interior and exterior sufferings, with an unquenchable thirst for still more. "Without the cross and without the Blessed Sacrament," she exclaimed, in an ecstasy of joy, "I could not live, for it would be impossible for me to bear my long exile in this valley of tears." She instilled the same ideas in her novices. "Carry your cross," she repeatedly said to them, "carry it promptly, joyously, humbly." Then she would speak to them of the humility and patience of the Sacred Heart, with such fervor and enthusiasm that they never wearied of listening to her, and surnamed her their St. John, for like him she could speak of nothing but the love of God.

She recommended the devotion to

the Sacred Heart, both in writing and verbally to the clergy and laity, considering everything gained when she obtained a fresh client for this devotion. It was about this time she wrote these memorable lines to Father de la Colombière: "Ah, were it possible for me to relate all I know about this devotion to the Sacred Heart! Could I but disclose to the world the rich treasury of graces, locked up in the Heart of Jesus and which He is so anxious to shower down on all! I entreat you, dear Rev. Father, never to forget to make it known to everybody. Our dear Lord has told me it is His intention to make use of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus to spread this devotion, through which He will gain a countless number of faithful servants, sincere friends and truly grateful children. I do not think there is a practice of devotion in the spiritual life more capable of elevating souls in a very

short time to the highest pitch of perfection, and making Jesus experience the tenderness of their love in serving Him, than this devotion to His Sacred Heart. Yes, I can confidently assert that did men know how pleasing this devotion is to Jesus, there are no Christians, however lukewarm they might be, who would not at once practise it. Urge souls, and more especially those serving God in religion, to consecrate themselves to this Sacred Heart, which they will find a most efficacious means to restore regularity in convents, bring them back to their first fervor, and lead all to the highest pitch of perfection. Those laboring for souls will have the power to touch the most hardened hearts, and if they be animated with a tender love for this Divine Heart will obtain the most astonishing results.

“The laity will find in this devotion all the assistance they require for their

state of life, peace in their families, consolation in afflictions and trials, God's blessing on all their undertakings. This Heart will be their secure refuge in life and death. Ah, how easy it is for those to die who in life have honored the Heart of the One who is to be their Judge!"

At last Margaret had the happiness of seeing all her community consecrate themselves to this Divine Heart. At the close of the octave of Corpus Christi, 1686, the Sister most opposed to this devotion came and asked her for a picture of the Sacred Heart, which Margaret silently, but with a throbbing heart, gave her. She immediately afterwards hastened to her spiritual children, imploring them to pray earnestly to God to grant her at last that for which she had so long prayed and suffered. When the Sisters went next morning to the chapel they found the beloved picture of

the Sacred Heart enthroned on an altar in the midst of flowers, with an inscription inviting everybody to honor it. On learning that this delightful surprise was the work of the nun who was the most opposed to this devotion, the long suppressed cry of enthusiasm burst forth, carrying everything with it. During all this happy day nothing was heard but one continual hymn of praise in honor of this Divine Heart, and the nuns, in spite of their great poverty, resolved to have a chapel dedicated to it built on their grounds, which was at once begun. All this happened shortly before the Blessed Margaret's death.

"I am ready to die," she wrote to a former superioress, "now that the devotion to the Sacred Heart is beginning to spread; let us love the Sacred Heart and banish every other care."

One day, during the same year, inspired by God, she made the heroic

vow, which completed the sacrifice of herself. As a proof of how pleasing this sacrifice of herself was to our dear Lord, He showed her His Heart, shining like the sun, surrounded by rays of fire, a crown of thorns wreathed round it, the deep wound open, and surmounted by a cross, which seemed to spring forth from it. He explained to her that His love was the cause of all His sufferings, which were ever present before His eyes during His life here on earth. The devotion of the Sacred Heart, first understood at Semur-en-Auxois, then at Paray-le-Monial, the home of the Blessed Margaret Mary, soon found such favor that it was taken up by the houses of the Visitation at Dijon and Moulins and soon afterwards, with the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities it was publicly practised. But the propagation of this devotion is mainly due to a little pamphlet by Father de

la Colombière, which was published after his death.

Margaret's end was now drawing near, and she said to her Sisters: "I shall die this year, for I am no longer in pain, and the spouse of Christ crucified cannot live without suffering." In order to prepare herself for her long journey to eternity, she made a retreat of forty days, during which time she seriously examined her past life, trembled at the justice of God, bewailed her past infidelities, and full of hope and confidence hid herself in the Heart of her Redeemer, where she found rest and peace. Two months later she had a slight attack of fever, which was thought to be of no importance. As she persisted in asking for the last sacraments the Blessed Eucharist was administered to her. She received it with the greatest devotion and breathed her last on the following day.

Margaret had one more battle to encounter before dying. At the approach of death, her soul was filled with apprehension at the thought of the justice of God, and in her anguish she cried aloud for mercy, but soon peace and joy returned, and she yearned for the happy moment when she would be united to her God. "Oh!" cried she aloud, "when wilt Thou, O Lord, release me from this land of bondage? How happy I am at the thought that I shall soon go to the house of my God." It was whilst speaking about the love of the Sacred Heart to those standing round her bed, that she expired, with the names of Jesus and Mary on her lips, at the age of forty, October 17, 1690.

Her body, beautiful in death, was carried the next day to the convent chapel, where crowds of people flocked round her bier to have one last look at one whom they already considered

a saint, and to implore her intercession. After her death the devotion to the Sacred Heart rapidly spread over the whole world. This was due in great measure to the efforts of Father Croiset, a member of the Society of Jesus, who had personally known the Blessed Margaret Mary, and whose works she had predicted would greatly promote this devotion.

In a very short time numbers of churches and chapels were dedicated to the Sacred Heart, and the feast was soon publicly observed. The Benedictine Fathers were the first to place it on the calendar of their feasts, and in 1693 Pope Innocent XIII. confirmed this devotion. By the year 1726 no less than three hundred and seventeen confraternities were erected in all parts of the world. Entire dioceses and countries were consecrated to the Sacred Heart, and sought therein a secure protection against their ene-

mies, and more especially against the spirit of unbelief.

3.—Father de la Colombière, S.J.

On February 15, 1682, died the learned Father de la Colombière, S.J., who had been for some time the confessor of the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque. It was of him that Our Lord said to the Blessed Margaret Mary: "Go and tell My servant to exert himself in establishing this devotion and in this way give pleasure to My Heart. He must not allow himself to get discouraged by the difficulties which will present themselves, for such will not be wanting, but he must remember that he who distrusts himself and places his entire trust in Me is all powerful."

On the first Friday after the octave Corpus Christi, June 21, 1676, Father de la Colombière made a solemn con-

secration of himself to the Sacred Heart.

The Blessed Margaret Mary, speaking of the same Father, says: "Once, whilst this Father was saying Mass in our chapel, Our Lord, after holy communion, showed me His Sacred Heart, like a glowing furnace, together with two other hearts, united to each other and sunken within it, and He said to me: 'Thus My pure love unites the three hearts forever.' And He gave me to understand that this union contributed to the honor of His Sacred Heart, and that He wanted this Father, through my instrumentality, to proclaim and explain to men its value and the blessings attending it. It was for this reason, like brother and sister, we were to have an equal share in His spiritual treasures." In a letter written to Father de la Colombière, the Blessed Margaret Mary says: "I entreat of you, Rev. Father,

never to fail to do all in your power to spread the devotion of the Sacred Heart among the faithful. You know Jesus Christ has distinctly told me He wishes to make use of the Fathers of the Society to be the promoters of this devotion, and by this means draw countless numbers of souls to Him." Shortly after Father de la Colombière was sent to accompany Marie Eleanore Beatrix d'Este, Duchess of York and future queen consort, and the daughter of the Duke of Modena, to England. He returned to France in 1682, a victim to the Titus Oates plot.

An account after his death of the extraordinary favors God lavished on him during his spiritual exercises, was found among his papers and immediately published.

Special mention is made in Father de la Colombière's little book of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Speak-

ing of it, he says: "At the conclusion of this exercise, I made the firm resolution, as Our Lord had desired me, to labor with all my might at the promotion of the devotion. I have, with the blessing of God, already prevailed on many here in England to take up this pious devotion, and have written to a friend, begging of him to do all in his power to further it. . . . Oh," he exclaims, "could I but proclaim to the whole world what Thou so ardently desirest from Thy friends and servants." Perhaps, you also, dear reader, urged on by the Sacred Heart, have felt a wish arise in you, either verbally or by writing, to increase the devotion to the Sacred Heart, but have been held back, owing to the difficulties you may have to overcome. I entreat of you not to think of the trouble, but carefully to read these lines over and over again and be assured you will have a share in the same promises which were

made to Father de la Colombière, "The persons who spread this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be effaced."

**4.—First Decree Permitting the Feast
of the Sacred Heart to be Publicly
Observed.**

The nuns of the Visitation in France had presented a petition to Mgr. de Janson, the Papal legate at the French court, imploring him to obtain for them from the Holy See permission to celebrate publicly the feast of the Sacred Heart on the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi. At the session of the Congregation of Rites, which took place 1697, under Pope Innocent XII., the postulator of the cause warmly recommended the petition of the Sisters. To this the Promotor Fidei objected, as he maintained it was an innovation and cited a passage

from St. Bernard. To this the postulator replied by quoting another passage from the same author. It is true, he said, it here is a question of something new, but it is not here a question of a useless innovation, for it is known to be a devotion which has been practised for ages, an inheritance of the Church, Jesus Christ being its founder. He felt certain that the petition was suggested to them by the piety of the nuns, and not from a desire for novelty, and that it was a matter worth taking into consideration. He also made the remark that Queen Mary, the wife of James II. of England, strongly recommended this devotion. On the 30th of March, 1697, the Sacred College of Rites published the first decree concerning the devotion to the Sacred Heart, permitting thereby the priests to say not only the Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart, but also in honor of the Five Wounds of Our

Lord on the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi in the Church of the Visitation at Geneva, which permission the following year was also granted to the nuns of that Order at Nice.

5.—The Celebrated Bull *Auctorem Fidei*.

On August 28, 1794, the Holy Father, Pius VI., published his celebrated Bull *Auctorem Fidei*, in defence of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The Jansenist Bishop of Pistoja, in Tuscany, Scipio Ricci, had summoned in 1786 a diocesan synod to abolish the devotion to the Sacred Heart, "as an erroneous, or to say the least of it, dangerous innovation." It was for this reason Pius VI. stigmatized in his Bull this assertion of the opposer to this devotion as false, presumptuous and offensive to pious ears,

insulting to the Apostolic See and injurious to the honor of the Sacred Heart, adding: "The faithful worship the Sacred Heart not divided nor separated from the Godhead, and pray to it as being the Heart of Jesus—that is the Heart of the Person of the Eternal Word, with which it is inseparably united, and as such is worthy of worship." What the Holy Father means is this: "The object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is precisely that Heart of flesh and blood, which, once for us on earth, beat in the bosom of Jesus Christ for thirty-three years, was after His death pierced through by a lance, rose at Easter triumphantly with His sacred body, now beats with love for us at the right hand of God the Father, and is present in our churches in the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar. Consequently the faithful in honoring this Divine Heart honor no lifeless

heart, no heart separated from the love of Jesus and still less, divided from the Godhead. For inasmuch as the Church teaches us that Jesus Christ is present in heaven and in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, soul and body, flesh and blood, a living body with a living Heart, an incarnate body with an incarnate Heart, the faithful are fully justified in paying to it not the honor they pay to the saints, but that honor due to it as the Heart of the divine Word." The reason it is more honored than the other members of the sacred body of Our Lord is clearly explained in a letter written by His Holiness, Pius VI., to Bishop Ricci: "We honor and contemplate in the symbolic picture of the Sacred Heart the immeasurable and overflowing love of our divine Redeemer."

Pius VII., the successor of Pius VI., on his return to Italy after his forced sojourn in France, under Na-

oleon I., had the happiness to see Bishop Ricci reconciled to the Church, having retracted his errors at Florence.



PART II.

EXAMPLES AND OPINIONS OF THE SAINTS CONCERNING THE DEVOTION OF THE SACRED HEART.

6.—The Treasurer of the Sacred Heart.

WHENEVER our dear Redeemer has a special object in view for saving souls He always makes use of His Blessed Mother as the channel through which He conveys His graces to us. Mary, from the very commencement of the devotion to the Sacred Heart up to the present time, has proved how great an interest she takes in it. She is now saluted as, "Our Lady of the Sacred Heart," and

in some places a day is set apart during the month of May to honor her under that title. This must indicate that Mary is that beautiful morning star, which continually accompanies the sun of grace, and promotes the devotion to the Sacred Heart. It must not be forgotten that when every year, during the month of June, this sun warms and lights up the hearts of the children of earth with a greater abundance of grace, it is owing to the loving care of that realm of grace through whose co-operation this devotion was first introduced in the world. The life and writings of the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque clearly show how, from the very moment Our Lord began to prepare her to be the instrument chosen by Him to propagate this devotion, Our Lady was actively co-operating with her Son in His work.

The saint relates that even one day before she entered the convent Our

Lord said to her: "When you committed your virginal purity to My keeping I chose you for My spouse, and we have reciprocally plighted our troth. I inspired you to do this, even before the world could find an entrance into your heart, which I wanted to keep for Myself, pure and free from every stain of the spirit of this world, and in order to preserve it in this state I not only guarded your will from every evil that could injure it, but I handed you over to the care of My Mother, that she should prepare you to be what I destined you to be."

There is ample evidence of how faithfully Our Lady accomplished the task allotted to her by her divine Son. The predilection Margaret Mary had for the Visitation Order was the work of this tender Mother. When the relatives of Margaret Mary left nothing undone to prevent her entering the convent she had recourse to Our Lady,

who appeared to her and said: "Fear not, you are my true daughter and I will ever be your true Mother."

After she was a nun Our Lady continued to show her the same marks of affection. Once, when she was suffering more than usual, her superioress required her to ask Our Lord to cure her immediately, as a proof that these revelations were not delusions. She was at once restored to health, and Our Lady said to her: "Take courage, dearest daughter, and know that I have, in the name of my divine Son, restored you to health; you have still a long and painful journey to make; you will always be attached to the cross, wounded by thorns and nails and even scourged. Fear nothing, I will not forsake you, and promise you my protection." A promise which, added the saint, Our Lady faithfully kept.

The manner in which the Blessed **Margaret Mary** expresses the love

which she returned Our Lady is no less edifying: "Even as a child," she says, "I had always recourse to Our Lady in my troubles, and she always took care of me and saved me from great dangers. I ventured not to address myself to her Son, but I feared not to go to her. I would say the rosary in her honor, either kneeling, or making a genuflection and kissing the ground before each Hail Mary.

"After I went to school I was so seriously ill for four years that I could not walk. Finding medical assistance of no use I could think of no other remedy than that of consecrating myself to Our Lady, promising if cured to become some day one of her daughters. Scarcely had I made the promise before I recovered and received from Our Lady fresh assurance of her motherly protection.

"She obtained such power over me that she looked on me as her property,

governed me as she thought fit, corrected me, and taught me to do the will of God in all things."

The frequent apparitions of Our Lady and the childlike trust of the Blessed Margaret Mary, after her entrance into the Visitation, and at the commencement of her communications with Our Lord concerning the devotion to His Sacred Heart, prove that the bonds of union between Mother and child became still closer.

We also must have recourse to Mary in order to reach the treasures of the Sacred Heart. Listen to the advice of the Blessed Margaret Mary, when speaking of Our Lady. "Join as closely as possible with Mary, in paying homage, loving and adoring the Word made flesh in her womb. For this reason offer up to the Eternal Father the sacrifice of burning love which the Sacred Heart presents to Him, on the altar of His Mother's

heart, so that all may be converted and inflamed with His love."

And it is with these dispositions and in this spirit that you should, dear reader, try to celebrate the month of May, as a preparation for the next month, so superabounding in grace, the month of the Sacred Heart. Honor during these days of preparation Our Lady, who is the treasurer of the Sacred Heart; she will, with the Blessed Margaret Mary, the first disciple of the Sacred Heart, help you to adorn it, by honoring it in word and deed during this acceptable time. Be at once ready to say: "I implore Thee, O Heart of Jesus, living in the heart of Mary, to live and reign in the hearts of all men and to enkindle in them the fire of Thy pure love."

**7.—The Immaculate Heart of Mary a
Heart According to the Heart of
Jesus.**

On the Sunday during the octave of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, the feast in honor of her immaculate heart is observed.

This new devotion, which has made rapid progress in all hearts, is an offshoot of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and has not accidentally sprung from it as from a parent stem. It is true we must appropriate the virtues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to ourselves, but at the same time we must seek for a fitting pattern of them to help us in our weakness, and also search for "a heart after the Heart of Jesus."

Where, in the first place, shall we turn our eyes, if not to the immaculate heart of Mary? We have already meditated on her as "the Mother

of God, the treasurer of the Sacred Heart"; let us, therefore, consider to-day what is the value of her heart. Mary has all the power over the Sacred Heart, due to her as the Mother of Our Lord; she is, moreover, as the Church calls her, "the Mother of pure love." Let us, therefore, go to her, if we want to be inflamed with this love. The hearts of Jesus and Mary are too closely bound together for the one not to lead us infallibly to the other. If the holiness and justice of our Judge frightens the sinner too much to permit his going straight to the Heart of Jesus, there is the heart of Mary, which will obtain for those who are still in sin the grace of reconciliation, and prepare them to reach the Heart of Jesus. Even the greatest sinner should not doubt the possibility of obtaining this grace through Mary, for she is the Refuge of sinners, and the hope of all in this sinful

world. Oh, how consoling is this for us, who are prone to sin and miseries of every kind! We could scarcely expect to have access to the Heart of Jesus but for our Mother of mercy.

Once, whilst St. Gertrude was saying the "Hail, holy Queen," with great devotion, and laying stress on the words: "Turn, then, thine eyes of mercy towards us," Our Lady appeared to her, and showing her the infant Jesus, whom she carried in her arms, said: "Behold the clemency and compassion which I, according to my will, can turn towards those who call on me." Let us have great confidence and a tender love for Mary, for we will then soon be moved to love her Son. This is the priceless treasure she obtains for her servants. Every blessing comes to us through Mary. The Church, speaking of her says: "He who has found Mary has found life,

and will obtain salvation from the Lord."

It is not difficult to approach this gentle, loving Mother. She herself says she will anticipate those who seek her and be the first to show herself. Yes, it is she who inspires us with every grace. Let us also consider that it was for our sakes that her heart was pierced with the seven swords of sorrow. After suffering so much for us on earth, will she not care for us now that she is the glorious Queen of heaven? Besides, our dear Lord, when dying on the cross, gave her to us, to be Our Mother; will her heart, which was always ready to do what He wished, not foster a motherly feeling in our behalf? Will not Jesus Himself infuse a motherly love for us in her heart? Let us above all have recourse to her under the title of Immaculate; this is her dearest prerogative and she can refuse nothing to

those who invoke her under that name. We will also present our petitions to God the Father through the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to Jesus through the heart of His Mother.

Blessed Joseph Hermann used daily to pray to the heart of Mary, and received every day fresh graces from it. Blessed Mary of the Incarnation practised the same devotion. She prayed to Jesus through the heart of Mary, and to the Father through the Heart of Jesus. Our Lady revealed to St. Gertrude how pleasing this devotion was to her, and how meritorious it was in the sight of God. One Christmas eve St. Gertrude was sadly thinking how she had let Advent pass without having performed any special devotion in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, she, as an atonement for her neglect, offered up to Our Lady the Sacred

Heart of her Son. At once, the Blessed Virgin let her know what a pleasure such a costly present gave her, and thanking her for it, declared this was more meritorious than any other good work she could have done in her honor.

Let us say to this gentle Mother, "O Mother of Mercy, cast a look of pity on our misery and desolation in this valley of tears. Beg of Jesus to open His Heart to us, and to teach us to place all our necessities in it. Remember that just as of old the Jews had only to look up to the brazen serpent to be cured, so we also in like manner have only to cast our eyes on Jesus to obtain relief. We will not let thee, O Mother Mary, rest, till we have obtained through thee a true knowledge and love of the Sacred Heart."

8.—**St. Joseph, the Friend of the Sacred Heart.**

This title betokens the love the Sacred Heart had for St. Joseph whilst on earth, and which it has especially for him now he is in heaven. This title is also a proof of the faithfulness with which St. Joseph requited the love of this Heart by a return of love. Some time ago, speaking of Our Blessed Lady, we said that, "Mary was with Jesus like a mother to a child," and this may be also said of St. Joseph in reference to Jesus. "He was the best of fathers to the most amiable of sons." His devotedness, which is a real mark of love, has also to be considered, for Our Lord expects it from all His friends, and if we want to rank among their number and the lovers of the Sacred Heart, we must seek to imitate St. Joseph in this. It is indeed the greatest happiness on

earth to be loved by Jesus, but we must strive to render ourselves worthy of this love, for Jesus Himself declared, when the woman in the crowd exclaimed, "blessed is the womb that bore Thee," "Yea, blessed are they who hear My word and keep it."

What Our Lord requires of hearts consecrated to Him is an ever increasing love. Their devotedness and tender love must continually follow the stream of grace. As the Psalmist says in the eighty-third psalm, speaking of the just man: *Ascensiones in corde suo disposuit*—in his heart he hath disposed to ascend by steps to Thee.

It is in this continual ascension that the beauty of St. Joseph consists. His prompt obedience when sent into exile in Egypt, his grief at the loss of the child Jesus in Jerusalem, reveal to us those priceless hidden virtues, only known to God and Mary and the an-

gels, of which St. Peter speaks in his first epistle. (St. Peter, i. 3, 4.)

Conjointly with Mary he formed on earth the whole court of the King of kings; he saw what Mary did and strove his best to imitate her, and although he could not reach the same degree of perfection, nothing but one continual strain of the most beautiful harmony was continually bursting forth from the love of these two hearts. Nazareth, the Temple, the tabernacle tell us the indescribable consolation the Sacred Heart of Jesus received from the purest of virgins and the most righteous among men. It is impossible for words to describe it, but the heart will finish what the tongue fails to express, and proclaim aloud that Joseph, through his devotedness, has indeed deserved the name of the "Friend of the Sacred Heart." Let us try to imitate his virtues, and Jesus will also receive us into His Sacred

Heart and rank us among the number of His friends.

9.—The Spear and Nails.

On the Friday after the first Sunday in Lent the Church celebrates the feast of the Spear and Nails of Our Lord. Pope Innocent VI., in his decree of the institution of this feast, says: "Even if the spear and nails and all the other instruments of the sacred Passion were honored all over the Christian world, we would think it just and fitting to appoint a separate feast for each individual instrument of the Passion." St. Augustine writes: "It would be impossible for me not to be filled with fear at the sight of the enormity of my sins, had I not before my eyes the sight of the death of my Saviour, for the weight of my sins cannot equal the merits of such a death. The nails and spear cry loud-

ly out to me, that I am reconciled to that Jesus whom I love with all my heart." St. Bernard says: "How could Our Saviour have better shown us that fire of love which consumes His Sacred Heart? The bosom, and the interior of that Divine Heart were pierced by the soldiers with a spear—this Divine Heart, which had been already wounded by the spear of love." St. Lawrence Justinian says: "His flesh was once wounded by an iron spear, but how many times has His Heart been wounded by the darts of love! His body was wounded once by one man, how many times has His Heart been wounded by many a sinner?" Innocent VI. exclaims: "Oh, happy spear! which has been found worthy to enrich us with so many graces, and to increase the glory of such a triumph." St. Bonaventure, the seraphic son of the seraphic father, writes: "See, the gates of

paradise are opened, the angel with the flaming sword is not seen as he was at the gates of the earthly paradise. Oh, no! Through the centurion's spear the entrance is secured to us. The treasury of wisdom and eternal love stands wide open. Let us all enter through the broad opening of that divine wound. Oh, happy spear! which has been found worthy to open such a gate; gladly would I have liked to have been that spear. I would never have gone out of that Heart; I would have said it is my resting-place, here will I rest, for I have chosen it for myself." O Christian soul, created after the likeness of God, can it be possible thou are not overcome with joy at the sight of thy divine Bridegroom, who opened the innermost part of His body so that thou mightest give Him thy heart?

10.—St. Longinus and the Fathers of the Church.

On March 15th the Church celebrates the feast of St. Longinus. A native of Cappadocia, he was the centurion sent by Pontius Pilate to assist at the crucifixion of Our Lord, and to guard His tomb. At the sight of the wonders which took place after the death of our blessed Redeemer, enlightened by God, he exclaimed, striking his breast: "Indeed this Man was the Son of God," and several years after he had the happiness, together with two other of his fellow soldiers, to shed his blood for the sake of his faith. He is the same of whom it is mentioned in the New Testament: "One of the soldiers with a spear opened His side and immediately there came out blood and water." (St. John xix. 34.)

It may be interesting to some of our readers to know how the Sacred Heart

was honored by the Fathers of the Church in the first ages. I believe they confined their devotion to it to these three points. They saw in the Sacred Heart:

1. The origin of the Church.
2. The source of the sacraments.
3. They discovered in it a refuge in danger, temptation and salvation after the fall.

Father Croiset is therefore right, in affirming that all the saints of the Church who have been flooded with the greatest graces have had a most tender and intimate love for Jesus, and also that there are few who have not loved the wounded Heart of Jesus with a most tender devotion. St. Augustine calls our attention to the fact that it is not said in the Gospel "that a soldier *wounded* the side of Jesus, but that he *opened* it," in order that the gates of life may remain open for us, for there is the source of those sacra-

ments, without which life cannot be given to us. That blood which was shed has flowed for the forgiveness of sin, and that water is at the same time a bath and a beverage for us. Then follows one of his most beautiful comparisons: "Just in the same manner as there was an opening in the ark of Noe, through which all who entered were saved, so also should we go through the wounded side of Jesus into His Sacred Heart. In the same way as the first woman was formed from the side of the first Adam, and called life and mother of all the living, so also did the second Adam sleep in the sleep of death on the tree of the cross, in order to form a spouse, who came from the side of the Sleeper." St. Bernard, in his second sermon, "*De mutatione aquæ*," calling on the soul consecrated to God, makes use of similar language. Oh, what ought to be thy feelings towards God! How

great ought to be thy reciprocal love for the One who has prized thee so much that He has formed thee out of His sacred side, when for thy sake He slept the sleep of death on the tree of the cross!

St. Cyril of Alexandria expresses himself as follows: "When the soldiers had noticed Jesus had bowed down His head, thinking He was dead, they would not break His legs, but as there was still a chance He might not be dead, they opened His side with a spear, out of which flowed blood and water, an emblem of our mystical union with the Church and holy Baptism."

The following lines are from Pope Innocent VI.: "Among the many mysteries of the Passion of Our Lord, we ought especially to turn our eyes to the wound made by the spear in His sacred side after His death, whence flowed that blessed water and blood,

which formed our virgin Mother, the Church, His spotless spouse."

In another place he says: "The spear which has wounded a dead Heart cured our wounds and has given us life."

And in explaining those words of the prophet Zacharias (xiii. 1.): "In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner, and of the unclean woman," the Holy Father exclaims: "Oh, blessed opening of the sacred side! through which so many and such great blessings of divine love flow." Let us now listen to the words of St. Augustine and St. Cyril of Alexandria, both of whom were convinced that through the opening of the side of Jesus a source of grace and a safe asylum were furnished us. "Longinus has opened with his iron spear the side of Jesus; I will hide myself in that side and rest therein in perfect safety."

St. Bernard, in one of his books, says: "The reason why Thy side, O my Jesus, has been pierced, is in order to give us access to it; the reason why Thy Heart is wounded is that we may dwell in it free from any exterior disturbance, and see, through the visible wound, the invisible wound of love." Whilst here on earth we must love and embrace that dear Sufferer, whose hand and Heart were pierced for our sakes, and entreat Him to wound our hardened and impenitent hearts with the darts of love, and fasten them to Himself. It is of the wound of His Sacred Heart that Our Lord is speaking, when He says to the Blessed Margaret Mary: "See this Heart, which has so loved men that it has shed even its last drop of blood for them. If they only showed themselves grateful to Me for what I have done for them it would seem nothing to My love, but

the only reward I receive is coldness and the basest ingratitude. Give Me therefore this consolation by making up as much as you can for the ingratitude of others."

11.—Do Not be Discouraged.

St. Angela of Foligno had many difficulties to encounter after her conversion. The worldly life she had formerly led had taken such deep roots that it required great efforts on her part to destroy them. Satan not only suggested to her that she would not persevere in her conversion, but that it was foolish for her to impose such an impossible task on herself, for which she would be blamed by every sensible person. In the midst of this battle and anguish of soul she at once had recourse to God, begging of Him to come to her assistance. One day, whilst thus praying for help from

God, she fell asleep and dreamed that she saw Our Lord, who said to her: "In this Heart all is truth and there is no shadow of an untruth in it." At first she did not understand the meaning of this, but later on Our Lord showed her how faithfully He keeps His promises of helping those who invoke Him. "Oh," said He to her, "what have I not suffered, especially for the sins of thy heart! It was in all things opposed to God's commands, filled with anger, envy, sensuality, a seething sea of sinful feelings and passions. This is why I allowed My Heart to be pierced. From this Heart comes that healing power which removes every evil from the human heart. Water flowed from it, to extinguish the flames of concupiscence, and blood streamed down to take away sorrow." Thus did Our Lord console her and prepare her for fresh encounters, and it was through her de-

votion to and trust in the Sacred Heart that she succeeded in gaining the victory and attaining to the highest degree of perfection.

12.—St. Peter Damian.

On February 23d the feast of St. Peter Damian, who died in 1072, is kept. This saint gives us one of the best explanations of the words contained in the litany of the Sacred Heart. "Heart of Jesus, in which all the treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge are contained—refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, terror of the devils—our help in our many great necessities, have mercy on us." Speaking of the beloved apostle, he says: "Because all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are contained in the Heart of Jesus, he, the beloved apostle, receives at the Last Supper, from the heavenly treas-

ury, the money necessary to enrich us with lavish liberality. Yes, it was not only for his own sake that he ate and drank at this overflowing fountain of divine wisdom, but it was also to enrich us in God's good time. It is also from that Heart that every priest should draw help in all his needs."

In another place the saint writes: "We find in the Divine Heart of Our Lord all the weapons necessary to defend us, the means to cure us, powerful assistance at the time of temptation, the sweetest consolation in affliction, the purest delight in this valley of tears." Then addressing himself to the poor soul bowed down under the weight of sin, he says, "Art thou sad, confused at the sight of thy sins; is thy heart cast down under the burden of violent passions? Throw thyself in the Heart of Jesus. It is a safe place of refuge, for it is the refuge of the sinner, the salvation of the Christian.

‘Come to Me, all ye who labor and are burdened and I will refresh you. Learn of Me that I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest in your soul.’ ”

13.—St. Mechtilde.

On February 23d, the feast of St. Mechtilde, the sister of St. Gertrude, Abbess of the Benedictines, is kept.

You are perhaps, dear reader, a member of the Apostleship of Prayer, perhaps, also, a promoter. This feast should remind you of three duties which pertain to you as such:

1. Properly to honor the Sacred Heart.

2. To pray, work, suffer for the intentions of the Sacred Heart: i. e., to offer all your work, prayers, sufferings, according to the intentions of the Apostleship, so as to obtain what the loving Heart of Jesus is praying for,

for yourself and for others in the tabernacle.

3. These prayers must be offered up in union with the prayer, work and sufferings of the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary.

We read in the life of St. Mechtilde that Our Lord said to her: "I give My Heart as a pledge, I give it to you as a refuge." She received at that time at each of His apparitions some fresh grace from this loving Heart, so that she herself said: "If I noted down all the graces I have received from the Sacred Heart, they would fill a book larger than the breviary." Once, after holy communion, it seemed to her as if Our Lord took her heart, and so united it to His, that the two hearts seemed to form only one. Our Lord then addressed her as follows: "The hearts of all mankind ought to be united to Me in this manner." Another time at the consecra-

tion she saw the Sacred Heart like a flaming torch, which Our Lord as priest, lifted up. Once whilst praying for a person to obtain a pure and humble heart, Our Lord, in answer to her petition, replied as follows: "Just as a child goes and asks its father for all it needs, so shall that person seek and obtain all she wants from My Sacred Heart." We may here conclude with the promise Our Lord made to the Blessed Margaret Mary: "Proclaim it and let it be known all over the world, that I will place no limit or measure to My graces to all who seek them through My Sacred Heart."

14.—The Venerable Thomas of Jesus.

On April 17, 1582, the venerable Thomas of Jesus, the son of a Portuguese nobleman, and a member of the Order of the hermits of St. Augustine, died in captivity at Sagen, in

Africa. At the age of eighteen he entered that Order, became novice master, and later on, with the permission of his superiors, retired to a house of the same congregation, where the religious discipline was practised in all its severity. Here he remained till he was sent, in 1578, by order of Sebastian, King of Portugal, with the troops to fight against the Moors in Africa. There he was taken prisoner and sold to a Marabout (that is, a Mohammedan monk). He refused to be ransomed, preferring to remain in bondage in order to encourage the captive Christians, who, being unable to endure the weight of their chains and the ill-usage of the Moors, were tempted to apostatize. It was in order to console these poor Christians that he wrote, during his captivity, his celebrated work on the sufferings of Our Lord. I shall note some passages from it, dear reader, to show you how his opin-

ions concerning the devotion to the Sacred Heart coincide with those of the Blessed Margaret Mary. He says: "The Sacred Heart is:

"1. The centre of the greatest and yet unrequited love.

"2. The seat of suffering.

"3. Our place of refuge."

1. Love has the properties of fire, which is the most powerful and active of all the elements; hence it is that God is called in Scripture "a consuming fire." (Deut. iv. 24.) The human understanding cannot grasp the power of divine love in the Divine Heart of God, and it was with this fire of love the incarnate Word burned. It was consumed with the desire to accomplish what was proposed to it, and yet it was forced to wait long years till the time decreed by divine wisdom had come. No one can ever conceive or express the solicitude of the Heart of our dear Lord for the salvation of man-

kind, or the patience and gentleness with which it welcomed men and bore with their perverseness.

2. Love has its sufferings. "Oh, how little do the lovers of the world understand this kind of suffering! Only those who love Thee understand it. Is it not a cause of suffering for Thee to hope and desire that out of those boundless flames of Thy pure, divine love, some spark may fly from Thee and enkindle in Thy servant such a longing for Thee, that without Thee life is a continual martyrdom?"

3. He considered it his place of refuge. "Oh, heaven, open thy gates to let me behold my Lord! But dear Jesus, what do I say? heaven is deaf and will not hear me. Thy sweet Heart is my living heaven. It has eyes which behold; ears which listen; a will which loves; beauty which refreshes; light which gives light; O my living heaven, Thou seest and un-

derstandest me, open Thyself to me, to let me see what is taking place in Thee. Receive me, my sweet heaven, lock me up in Thyself, and then men may speak of me as they will. It is contrary to Thy nature to be hard with sinners; be not so with me. If I am blind send me light. I know Thou sighest after me, and Thou knowest I long for Thee. Open Thyself to receive me."

15.—St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi.

On May 25, 1607, St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi, a Carmelite nun, died. We only wish to draw the attention of our readers to two remarkable points in the history of the life of this great saint.

1. Her love of the apostleship of prayer, proceeding from her great love of the Sacred Heart.

2. The graces she received from this Divine Heart.

In the year 1583, whilst Magdalen was still a novice, she exclaimed, one day, overcome by grief, "Oh, my Beloved! How insulted Thou art; none know Thee, no one loves Thee." She was at once ordered to go to bed by her mistress of novices. "What, mother, must I lie down whilst the Heart of Jesus is so insulted?" Upon her mistress insisting, she gently replied, like a true saint: "Well, since it is to satisfy obedience, I will lie down." When she herself became mistress of novices she recommended to her spiritual daughters union with God, more than prayer. Some of them thought this impossible, but she explained to them "that although we cannot be always on earth united to God by prayer and meditation, yet we can offer up all we do, with the intention of honoring Him and obtaining the

conversion of sinners." During her life Mary Magdalen received extraordinary light from heaven on this subject. Once Our Lord complained He could find no one to appease His wrath against sinners. On hearing this she at once took the resolution to say the following indulgenced prayer fifty times a day: "O Eternal Father, I offer Thee the precious blood of Thy divine Son in atonement for my sins, for the wants of holy Church, the conversion of sinners, and the poor souls in purgatory." Our Lord, in order to show her how efficacious this little prayer was, let her see not only the number of conversions she had obtained through the recital of it, but also the souls who had been released from purgatory.

The following rule is the eighteenth out of the twenty rules of life which Our Lord Himself gave her: "Continue, in union with My faithful, who

are the members of My mystical body, the Church, to place all your interior and exterior actions on the altar of My Heart."

The graces she received from the Sacred Heart were most remarkable.

Once, when in an ecstasy, she exclaimed before the Sisters present: "See how the powers from the angelic choir take out of the side of Our Lord the nuptial ring, that precious pledge of the Spouse, without which I cannot imagine myself the bride of Christ. I plight my troth to Thee for all eternity." Another time, considering the heinousness of sin committed over the whole of the world, she cried out: "O miserable men, who have given themselves up to idle things, and commit every kind of crime! They have no other desire but to exalt themselves, and they fall down into the great abyss. O Heart of Jesus, men know Thee not, and

have forsaken Thee! They will not listen to what Thou demandest of them, 'that they should lead virtuous lives.' O ungrateful wretches, why do you resist your God?" After remaining an hour and a half in this state, weeping and trembling, Our Lord came to console her, and a few days later on placed His crown of thorns on her head. Whilst meditating on the mystery of the Incarnation, on the eve of the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, during an ecstasy which lasted eleven hours, the Blessed Virgin said to her: "You will see how they open His side, and both of us will seek and find rest in it." Another time these words: "And the Word was made flesh" were written in a wonderful manner on her heart, the name "Word" being in golden characters, and the other words in letters of blood.

16.—St. Francis de Sales.

On the 29th of January the Church celebrates the feast of St. Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva and the founder of the Order of the Visitation, to which the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque belonged. This great saint, who died December 28, 1622, was one of the purest images of the Sacred Heart, and the one who best understood the meaning of these words: "Learn of Me that I am meek and humble of Heart." He would often call the nuns of the Order he had founded, "The Daughters of the Sacred Heart" and say to them, "Would that the Heart of Jesus could live in our hearts and be always present in our hearts! Oh, how beautiful is Thy Heart! Would that I could always live in this heavenly dwelling!" He frequently mentions the Sacred Heart in his letters. "If you want to take part

with me in the work of preaching you can do so, if you will only daily ask God to put words in my mouth, according to His wishes and the desires of the Sacred Heart. If I have sometimes succeeded in my sermons in being of some benefit to others, it is thanks to the prayers of some fervent soul. It is true she does not know it, and this saves her from the danger of pride. She is just like the organ blower, without whose aid no sound can be produced on the organ; when a beautiful piece is played on this instrument, no credit is given to the blower. Pray often for me and you will also preach with me." Towards the close of the life of the Blessed Margaret Mary, St. Francis, accompanied by St. Jane de Chantal, appeared to her, and complained bitterly of some nuns of the Order, who were wanting in simplicity and humility. On the saint asking her holy founder the

cause of their deficiency in these virtues, he replied: "It is in order to appear righteous before others that they publicly accuse themselves of their faults, and not with the desire to make use of this remedy for their own good." Then showing her the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he continued: "Meditation on the love of Our Lord is a most efficacious means to correct our faults, and it is through His Sacred Heart that my daughters will be preserved from succumbing to the spirit of deceit and pride which Satan makes use of for the ruin of so many."

17.—St. John Berchmans.

On August 13, 1621, died St. John Berchmans, a novice of the Society of Jesus. It can be easily imagined how deeply this pious youth was filled with the spirit of the Sacred Heart and of the apostleship of prayer, since he has

been appointed, conjointly with St. Aloysius (who died August 15, 1568, aged nineteen), to be the patron and pattern of youth, by the late Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX. St. John was in the habit of dividing the memento of the Mass into five parts, in honor of the five wounds of Our Lord. Whilst contemplating the wound of the left hand, he would pray for the conversion of heretics, for the Jews, and for those in mortal sin; while contemplating the right foot, for the conversion of the lukewarm; but he reserved the wound in the side for himself. "I will implore God to grant me the grace to love Him with my whole heart, to have a great zeal for souls, to persevere in my vocation, to faithfully observe my vows, to obtain a great devotion for the Blessed Sacrament, and love for Our Lady." Is this not praying for and in the spirit of the Sacred Heart? Besides finding in

him the apostleship of prayer, we also find in him the apostleship of example. This young saint was very careful to make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and would experience great consolation in the evening examination of his conscience, if he had been the means of inducing others by his example to pay an extra visit to Our Lord. Once, whilst meditating on the incomparable purity of Our Lady, he earnestly implored God to grant him the grace not only to banish always every impure thought from his mind, but also that through his intercourse with others he might induce them to have a great love for the angelic virtue. Hundreds of young men have borne testimony on oath as to how fully this grace was granted to him. Many were delivered from evil thoughts, and acquired a love for holy purity through his instrumentality; some by their intercourse with him

during his life, others at the sight of his corpse in its coffin, and others again by merely looking at his picture. Added to this twofold apostleship of prayer and example he united that of speech. Whilst still studying at Mechlin he induced many of his fellow students to join the confraternity of Our Lady, to which he considered it the greatest blessing to belong.

18.—**Pius VIII.**

Whilst still Bishop of Montalto, in Italy, Pius VIII. established a branch of the arch-confraternity of the Sacred Heart in his cathedral church, the account of which cannot fail to interest any lover of that Divine Heart. He, himself, in answer to the petition asking permission for the confraternity to be established in his church, wrote the decree granting the petitioners their request, and expressed at the

same time, in words mostly taken from Scripture, the pleasure this petition had given him, for he said, "The Sacred Heart is the refuge of the sinner, and the gate of salvation to all who knock at it." Full of paternal solicitude for his flock, he, at once, on receiving the deed of affiliation to the arch-confraternity, addressed a pastoral letter to his people, in which he explains the excellence of this devotion, its efficacy in strengthening the faith in these days of tepidity, and recognizes in it the best means to awaken in us the true spirit of piety, in which the love for Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer, consists. He then goes on to explain in very strong terms the meaning of this devotion to the Sacred Heart, touches on the great mysteries of the life and Passion of Our Lord, depicting in glowing language its lofty aim, its fruits, its truly wonderful propagation;

sketches in an easy and concise manner how it is to be practised, and finally the means by which it can be acquired. Among these he considers a childlike devotion to the immaculate heart of Mary as the best. To sum up, as if inspired by God, he tries with a holy eloquence, an ardent zeal, and great clearness to urge his clergy to embrace this beautiful devotion, and to establish branches of the arch-confraternity in the parishes and religious communities of his diocese, so as to enable all his children to live in the hearts of Jesus and Mary. He had a triduum preached, preparatory to the opening of the confraternity in his cathedral, during which he, himself, gave special instructions to the clergy and people. On the day of its erection he assisted at all the religious ceremonies, administered holy communion to the crowds of people, who flocked from all parts, sang the

High Mass, preached, and concluded the day by giving solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. All this is narrated in the account sent to the arch-confraternity in Rome, and there is still existing a letter written by Pius VIII. himself, declaring that that day was one of the happiest in his life.

19.—A Jansenistic Mother Led to the Sacred Heart.

It is related in the life of the celebrated foundress of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, Mother Sophie Barat, that at one time her family had embraced heretical opinions. Even whilst she was still a child her family was quite opposed to the devotion to the Sacred Heart. In 1793, her brother, Louis, was taken a prisoner by the revolutionists. He was preparing for the priesthood and shortly before his arrest had sent two beautiful pictures

of the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary to his mother. Everything coming from that beloved child was doubly precious to the poor, afflicted parent, who, forgetting all family prejudices, had the pictures framed and hung in the place of honor in her own sitting-room. Here, in spite of the anger of her Jansenistic sister and the frequent visits of the revolutionists, she would, during these troubled times, gather together her family to pray for the safety of the beloved prisoner. Here also did Sophie learn to love and reverence the Sacred Heart.

20.—A Spouse of the Sacred Heart.

A young nun, belonging to the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, was dying; the priest who knew her, had just addressed a few words of consolation to her community, which he concluded in

these terms: "I will not leave you, dear Sisters, without telling you how greatly your beloved invalid has edified me. She is near her end. What a consolation it is for her to have persevered in her vocation. Her joy cannot be described. She seems even now to have a foretaste of heaven, and to see beforehand Jesus and Mary, the angels and the saints. Her joy is most intense at the thought of soon entering her heavenly home, of being exempt from sin, and able to pray for the dear Institute of the Sacred Heart, in which she has lived so happily and in which she is soon to die." These few words show us the state of the soul of the youthful sister, Louise Mallac. This highly accomplished and innocent nun had not overcome the terrors of death through natural motives, but by faith and supernatural grace, which pointed out to her that the entrance into eternal life was the

object of all her desires, the happy goal of her earthly pilgrimage. One of her sisters made the remark "that it was painful to see her suffer so much." "Is it not worth while to suffer a little?" she replied, "I was so happy, oh, so happy at home, and it is impossible for me to say how happy I have been in the convent, and now I am going to heaven."

Before the disease was at its height, the Sisters, fearing she might die during one of the frequent paroxysms, deemed it more prudent for her to receive the last sacraments on the 3d of December, the feast of St. Francis Xavier. She could not conceal her joy on being informed of their decision, and understanding the importance of the act did her best to prepare herself worthily for so great a grace. Entirely absorbed in these thoughts, she continually repeated these words: "It seems to me this will be one of the

happiest days of my life; just like the day of my first communion and my profession."

Before receiving the last rites of the Church, she humbly begged pardon of the Sisters for the bad example she had given them, and renewed her vows. After Extreme Unction had been administered to her, her face beamed with joy and she exclaimed aloud: "Oh, the graces this Sacrament imparts to us! Only those who have received it can understand it; it is a foretaste of heaven. You can understand my feelings, dear sisters, at the thought of soon seeing God, at being united forever to Jesus, my Saviour." She begged them to sing the *Magnificat* and the *Te Deum*.

It often happens that a sick person after receiving Extreme Unction, not only experiences spiritual, but also physical relief. It was the case with Sister Louise, for although never free

from pain, she lingered on till the 22d of January of the following year. This period of suffering must have been one of great merit for her. And there is every reason to believe that one whose life during the long weary hours of suffering was a continual act of love, is now reaping in heaven the reward of her patience and submission to the will of God, since it is said one act of perfect love is enough to obtain immediate entrance into heaven. Some one having said to her, "Are you not afraid of purgatory?" she replied with a smile: "I know I deserve it, but I trust God in His mercy will preserve me from it." Another time she said: "As I could not sleep for hours, I amused myself by thinking of my grave, and during this time falling into a doze, I fancied I saw Our Lord scattering little flowers over my bed, which I easily understood meant sufferings." Just in the

same manner as the roots of certain flowers when burned emit the strongest perfume, so did the virtues of Sister Louise appear in greater lustre as she drew nearer her end. Her happiness was so great that it communicated itself to the Sisters surrounding her dying bed. When the end was not far off she exclaimed: "I know of nothing which can trouble or distress me. Oh, what a grace to be cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus!" About eleven in the morning one of the infirmarians said to her: "Thank God, the end is drawing near." "Yes," she replied, "but I have still some hours to wait." She was mistaken. Her sisters came to pray round her death-bed, as her gasping showed her agony would soon be over. Just as the first stroke of the Angelus bell rang she asked to be raised a little, a proof that her hour of departure had come. Immediately the crucifix was

given to her to kiss, and as there was a slight pause in the prayers she cried out in a strong voice, "Mon Dieu, Mon Dieu, Mon Dieu!" These were her last words; in another second this beautiful soul was already with its God.

21.—Admiral Courbet, the Lover of the Sacred Heart.

The late French admiral, Courbet, had a special devotion to the Sacred Heart, and was one of the most zealous promoters of the erection of the magnificent basilica dedicated to this Divine Heart at Montmartre. Only a few weeks previous to his death in a distant land, the admiral had sent his usual annual munificent subscription to the building committee of this church. These gentlemen, writing about his death, said: "God has deprived him of the happiness of seeing

the church completed, but is there not every reason to hope that by his saintly death in the service of his country the gates of the eternal temple have been opened to him, and that he has found a dwelling-place near the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which he loved so dearly whilst here on earth?" Are not these lines in memory of the deceased admiral more precious than any statue in bronze?

22.—The Miracle of the Sacred Heart at Marseilles.

In the year 1730 the plague broke out with great violence in the city of Marseilles. All who possibly could, the magistrates included, fled from the town. In spite of the entreaties of his friends, the Bishop Henri de Belzunce persisted in remaining, for said he, "The good shepherd must give his life for his flock." In a very short time

the death-rate rose to one thousand per day, and it was hardly possible to bury the dead, who lay amidst the dying in the open streets and public squares. The bishop and his clergy, in spite of their heavy losses, for about two hundred and fifty priests had fallen victims to their charity, were to be seen everywhere, like ministering angels, preparing the dying for their journey to eternity. For more than four months the churches had been closed, for it was impossible to celebrate any public festival, when the bishop, as if inspired by God, determined to consecrate his whole diocese and the city of Marseilles to the Sacred Heart. The bells of the cathedral were once more heard, and the bishop's clergy, clothed as penitents and barefooted, walked in procession to one of the public squares, where an altar had been erected. At the end of the Mass his lordship, in a clear,

loud voice, read the act of consecration to the Sacred Heart. That same day the death-rate was much lower, and in a short time the plague disappeared entirely.

The city of Marseilles has ever since, out of gratitude to the Sacred Heart, renewed every year the act of consecration.

23.—The Republic of Ecuador Solemnly Consecrated a Second Time to the Sacred Heart.

Two years after the consecration of the Republic of Ecuador to the Sacred Heart, 1873, its pious president, Garcia Moreno, fell a victim to the hatred of the Freemasons. Just before expiring, his last words to his friends were: "Courage, courage, God does not die." Seven years of mismanagement and disturbance, in opposition to the religious feelings of

the nation had elapsed since the late lamented president's death, and his words came true, for the Conservatives once more came into power. One of the first acts of the new government was to issue the following proclamation:

"The Provisional Government, recognizing it is due to the protection of divine Providence alone that the present victory has been obtained for the good of the country, considers it as its imperative duty that an everlasting monument of gratitude be erected to God in the name of the people of Ecuador. It has, therefore, been determined:

"1. That a magnificent church, to be dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, be erected at the expense of the State and by voluntary subscriptions, and that the republic be consecrated to this Divine Heart.

"2. That the new church be built in

the capital of the republic, on the site chosen by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the aforesaid city.

“3. That the foundation stone of this new church shall be solemnly laid on August 10, 1884, the anniversary of the declaration of the independence of Ecuador.

“LOUIS CORDERO,

“AUGUSTIN GUERRERO.

“RAPHAEL PEREZ PARIJA.

“PABLO HERRARA.

“MODESTO ESPINOSA,

“Minister of the Interior.”

24.—The Sacred Heart in China.

The foundation stone of the second church publicly consecrated to the Sacred Heart in China was laid in Canton, one of the largest cities of the celestial empire, on December 8, 1863, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The following is an extract of a

letter from his lordship, Bishop Guillemain: "On October 2, 1849, Father Lalanne and myself reached Canton at about 11 P. M., with the intention of opening a mission in that city. After partaking of our scanty supper we prepared our little altar for Mass, and taking a small picture of the Sacred Heart from my pocketbook, I placed it over the altar. Stormy times were in store for us poor missionaries, and twice we were forced to fly from Canton. The picture of the Sacred Heart was our faithful companion during our wanderings to and fro. A short time ago a good opportunity for us to build a public church presented itself. Of course, to us poor missionaries there was no difficulty as to whom it should be dedicated. Had not the Sacred Heart helped us in our days of poverty and difficulties, and were we, now that better ones had come, likely to forget it? Oh, no! the

church must be dedicated to the Sacred Heart. It was a momentous time for us, the day on which we solemnly laid the first stone of the temple which was to be consecrated to the most high God, in presence of some of the greatest Chinese dignitaries, and this in the midst of the wealthy city of Canton, with its million of inhabitants, most of whom were idolaters. And what is most remarkable, and did not escape the notice of the missionaries, was that the interest of the upper class of Chinese waxed and waned in proportion as the building of the church progressed, or was by any accident checked. Even now, in its present state, the church is a blessing to us. . . . As soon as it is completed we intend placing a life-size picture of Our Lord over the high altar, one hand pointing to His Sacred Heart, the other receiving the chalice from an angel, that mysterious em-

blem of His Passion and of the Holy Eucharist. I trust that this beautiful church, built in the centre of the old city and on the site of the former Government Palace, will be the means of bringing many poor heathen Chinese to the knowledge of the true God and to our holy religion."



PART III.

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS A SECURE PLACE OF REFUGE IN DANGER OR ANY EMER- GENCY.

25.—Saved Through the Sacred Heart.

THE following is an extract from a letter written by the Rev. Father Roman, a missionary priest in China. About August 25, 1735, he had to make a long journey in order to visit the Christians intrusted to his care, who, on account of the great persecution then existing, were scattered far apart over the country. He had to cross the river Tung-Kiang in order to reach them. Owing to the careless-

ness of the rower the boat was upset, and Father Roman was in danger of being drowned. Full of confidence in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which he never failed to invoke in any emergency, he felt certain he would be saved. Such was the case, but he never could tell how he reached the other side of the river. Here again he experienced a fresh mark of the protection of the Sacred Heart. Some spies among the people who had witnessed the catastrophe failed to recognize him, and taking him for a merchant, allowed him to continue his journey unmolested. He was most successful in spreading the devotion to the Sacred Heart throughout the celestial empire, and for a long time this devotion flourished in Peking, the residential city of the Emperors of China.

During a fire which lasted eleven hours, the altar dedicated to the Sa-

cred Heart in the Jesuits' private chapel remained unscathed by the flames.

26.—The Sacred Heart, the Ruler of the Water.

The terrible calamity which took place in 1882 in South Tyrol in the Pusterthal, is well known to some.

During the disastrous months of September and October the usually quiet little stream running through the valley, owing to the melting of the snow on the mountains, was transformed into a rapid torrent, which, finding its bed too narrow, overflowed its banks and forced a passage through the fields adjacent to a newly built house, which, strange to say, it seemed to respect. "I happened," says a correspondent, "to be in that part of the country a few weeks after the catastrophe, and saw for myself

the house standing on a half moon shaped island formed by the waters. On making inquiries I was informed that whilst the men were at work for a whole day and part of the following night trying to save the house, the mother and daughter had gone to the parish church, and, kneeling down before the Blessed Sacrament, implored the Sacred Heart to take pity on them and save their home, promising if their petition was granted to publish it in *The Messenger* and to make a novena to the Sacred Heart by way of thanksgiving. Their prayer was heard, and the house is still to be seen, a striking memorial of the protection afforded by the adorable Heart of Our Lord to all those who call upon it."

27.—Saved from Certain Death.

The following is a copy of a letter written to *The Messenger of the Sa-*

cred Heart: “Out of gratitude to the Sacred Heart I am sending you an account of my father’s and sister’s escape from certain death, through the intercession of Our Lady and the protection of the Sacred Heart. Whilst returning home from a pilgrimage to one of the shrines of Our Lady, the horse attached to their carriage took fright at the sight of some large stones in the middle of the road. Death seemed inevitable. Either the carriage must fall over the precipice on one side of the road, or be dashed to pieces against the stones. There was no hope of procuring assistance, for the people on the road took care to get out of the way of the frightened animal. At last the coachman let go the reins, and at once the horse made for the precipice. Fortunately, my father, who wears the scapular of the Sacred Heart, managed to get hold of the reins and to check the horse,

which soon became quiet, and our two dear pilgrims, thanks to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady, reached home safely."

28.—Efficacy of the Scapular of the Sacred Heart.

In a letter written by a nun of the Visitation in France, speaking of the scapular of the Sacred Heart, she mentions two or three cases which came under her notice, proving the visible protection of God over all those wearing this badge of His divine love.

In 1866, at Amiens, not one of those attacked by the cholera, on whom the scapular of the Sacred Heart was placed, died from that fatal disease even when it was at its height. During the scourge, a gentleman, well known in that city as not practising his religion, was refused a scapular of

the Sacred Heart unless he promised to make his peace with God. He at once gave the required promise and returned home, carrying his precious treasure with him. He is now a good Catholic. In a battle between the Austrians, the cousin of a novice of the Visitation, whilst defending himself against a band of Austrian hus-sars, fell with his horse into a ditch, where he was left for dead by the enemy. The youth on recovering consciousness, found himself strong enough to walk several miles to the nearest railway station, where he took the train and reached home safely. When his head was examined no less than twelve wounds were found, not one of which proved fatal. He openly declares he owes his safety to the protection of the Sacred Heart, whose scapular he wears.

29.—The Sacred Heart and the Indians of the Rocky Mountains.

Father Caruna, writing to the director of the Apostleship of Prayer, shows how, even among the Indians of the Rocky Mountains, the Sacred Heart has many friends and devout clients. An Indian belonging to the tribe of the Cœurs d'Alene lay at the point of death, and Father Caruna was asked to administer the last rites of the Church to him. "I immediately went to see the sick Indian," says the missionary, "and gave him all the sacraments except the Holy Viaticum, which, owing to the nature of his disease, I did not deem prudent to give him. On my leaving him the poor man burst into tears and asked me why I did not give his Jesus to him for the last time, for he was quite aware there was no hope of his living through the night. I told him, in

order to console, and at the same time to test his sincerity, to ask the Sacred Heart to prolong his life till the next morning, and then he should certainly receive our dear Lord, which promise made him quite happy. Great was my astonishment to see him enter the church the following morning not only alive, but perfectly cured, and come up to remind me of my promise. You can understand, dear Father, how gladly I gave him holy communion."

30.—The Sacred Heart and the Cholera.

The following is taken from a letter written by a French missionary priest in Hindustan to a Catholic weekly paper in France:

One day, just as I was about to pay a visit to a cholera-stricken patient, two Christians came running after me, crying out, "Stop, Father. We are Christians from Bayalogam." "So

far? Must I bring Extreme Unction?" "Yes, Father, to every one in the village." "What? to the whole village?" "Yes, Father; read this," handing me a palm leaf on which the following was written: "The Christians of Bayalogam humbly implore you, Father, to come to their rescue. The cholera is at the gates of our village. The heathens and Turks near us have all got it. We are your children, and we entreat you not to desert us, but come and save us by saying Mass and hearing our confessions."

"My dear friends," said I to the messengers, "do you not see that our dear Lord and His Mother are taking care of you, since none of you have the dreadful disease? It would take me a whole week to reach your village, and I am wanted here day and night by people who are dying, whilst all yours are perfectly well. As long as you are free from the cholera, I am

bound to remain here to look after the sick."

"Well, Father, since you cannot come, tell us what we must do."

"As I cannot possibly go to you I will hand you over to the care of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who, without Extreme Unction, will assist you far better than I can. I remember in a large city in my own country, where more than one hundred and twenty persons were dying every day of the cholera, that no sooner had the bishop consecrated the city to the Sacred Heart than the cholera disappeared. Take this picture of the Sacred Heart, and carry it in procession next Sunday through your village. The few idolaters living in it will not prevent you."

"Oh, no, Father, for they asked us to beg of you to come and help us."

"Well, this is not all. As long as you are surrounded by the cholera as

many of you as possibly can must go every morning and evening to the church and say the litany of the Sacred Heart. Some of the grown up people will not always be able to go, but mind all the children assist at this devotion; not one must be absent. This I consider of vital importance. You understand what I mean? All the children, even those who can hardly walk, must go to church."

"Yes, Father, but many of these children cannot say their prayers."

"That does not matter. Tell them they are to ask our good Lord to take care of the village. He will understand them. Even the sight of these little ones kneeling at the foot of His altar is pleasing to the Sacred Heart, and He will listen to them, for they have not seriously wounded His Divine Heart by sin. Tell the grown up people I strongly enjoin them not

to do anything to displease the Sacred Heart. Now go home and do as I bid you, for I am certain the Heart of Our Lord will help and protect you." Two months later the sacristan from the church of Bayaloganı came to see me.

"Well, Anlapam, what about the cholera?"

"It has disappeared, Father."

"How many victims have you had?"

"None. But the heathen and Turkish villages have suffered greatly."

"Well, thank and praise the Sacred Heart of Jesus for having spared you."

**31.—A Mother's Prayer Granted to
Her on Her Death-bed by the
Sacred Heart.**

My mother had been a widow seven years when I left the grammar school at a little more than thirteen years of age to begin my studies for the priest-

hood. During the five years preceding my ordination she had been a constant sufferer, and being in very reduced circumstances she was very anxious about money matters, for fear I might be forced to discontinue my studies through want of the necessary funds. It had always been her ambition for me to be a priest, and in the midst of the most acute pain she would cry out: "Oh! could I but live to see you ordained a priest of God, and receive your sacerdotal blessing, I would die content. I am constantly asking this great favor from the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary."

The day for the solemn ordination to the priesthood had been fixed for the 29th of June, but thanks to a kind Providence, was changed to the 5th of the same month. Knowing that since the end of May my poor mother had a change for the worse, and that every day was expected to be her

last, I started for home the very day after my ordination, hardly daring to hope that I might find my beloved parent still alive. When I reached home at about 6 P. M. she was in fact to all appearances unconscious, and I immediately gave her the long wished for blessing. The sound of my voice must have roused her, for raising herself a little, she said, in an almost inaudible voice: "Oh, my dear Francis, God has heard my prayer even at the last hour. Let us thank Him, and the sacred hearts of Jesus and Mary," and after blessing me in her turn, she sank back on her pillows. Three hours afterwards she gently breathed her last, after receiving a final absolution from me.

32.—A Priest's Happy Death.

A priest, after a painful operation, lay for many weeks unconscious. His

friends, on learning from the doctor that he would in all probability die in this state, and therefore be deprived of the last sacraments, at once began a novena to the Sacred Heart, imploring our dear Lord to have pity on His servant. Their prayers were heard. Just as the novena was ended the sick man recovered consciousness, and asked to see a priest. He had the happiness of making a good confession, received all the last rites of the Church, and after spending an hour in prayer relapsed into his former state, and gently breathed his last at the end of three days.

33.—On the Threshold of the Priest- hood.

A youth, who ever since he was a little child, had wished to become a priest, was, owing to the premature death of his father, forced to leave

school to earn his daily bread. As he grew older the desire, in spite of what seemed to be its hopelessness, only grew stronger, and he at last determined to present his petition to the Sacred Heart, feeling certain he would not meet with a refusal, and also received holy communion for this intention. As a reward for his confidence in God a most unexpected opportunity for continuing his studies presented itself, on the very day he made his petition, and he will shortly be ordained priest.

34.—Unexpected Assistance.

A poor widow had been condemned to pay on April 27, 1868, a certain sum in court, otherwise the little she possessed would be seized. In spite of all her endeavors she had not succeeded in saving a penny from her scanty earnings. On the 26th of

April, not knowing how she could obtain the money, she went to Mass and there told the Sacred Heart—at the elevation—her troubles, begging of our dear Lord to assist her.

Whilst her children were playing the same afternoon in an old lumber room at the top of the house in which they lived, they found two pieces of paper lying on the floor, with something wrapped up in them, which, on their mother opening, proved to be no less than the exact sum of money she had to pay the next morning in court. The poor woman declared that had any one gone to the room before her children went there they must have found the money, and that she had not seen any one enter the house who could have placed it there.

35.—An Astronomer's Petition Granted.

The following is an account given by one of the astronomers sent to observe the transit of Venus, December 6, 1883: "We had been appointed to take observations during the transit of Venus, December 6, 1883, and had chosen a fitting site for that purpose, when to our great annoyance the telescope sent from Europe was delayed on the way. Finding the end of November drawing near, I began a novena to the poor souls, through the intercession of St. Anthony to the Sacred Heart, and promised three Masses in thanksgiving did the instrument reach us in time. On the second evening of the novena I became so convinced that the telescope had arrived that the following morning I started to fetch it from the station, which was at some distance from our place. I could not help asking myself on the road if

this was not superstition on my part. On our reaching the station that question was soon settled, for the first words the station-master said to me were: 'Your instruments are here.' One can understand what must have been our feelings on hearing this, for had the telescope arrived a day later it would have been impossible to get it ready in time. Unfortunately, just before the phenomenon took place, the sky became overcast, and remained so during the whole time of the transit of the planet. We had not asked the Sacred Heart to give us a fine day, but to send us the instrument, which it certainly did. As we had done all in our power, humanly speaking, no blame could rest on us if the expedition proved a failure."

36.—A Poor Day Laborer on the Verge of Starvation.

A poor woman, whose husband was a day laborer but out of work, did not know where to find the money to buy their next meal. Even if she had to starve herself, she felt constrained to provide food for her husband. In her distress she began a novena to the Sacred Heart, asking for help.

The same afternoon a neighbor came to see her and gave her a shilling, with which she was able to buy enough food for two days, and by that time her husband had found employment. The strange part of the story is that this was the only spare shilling her charitable neighbor had, and she declared she had felt herself urged in spite of herself to go and give it to her needy friend, instead of saving it for a rainy day.

37.—The Heart of Jesus the Salvation of Sinners.

The following is a letter addressed to the Rev. Father Ramière, the zealous promoter of the devotion to the Sacred Heart and of the Apostleship of Prayer:

“Reverend and Dear Father:—The arm of the Lord is not shortened. Yesterday it worked a great miracle in my behalf. Permit me to tell you all about it, so that you and all who read the account of my conversion, may unite with me in praising and thanking the infinite mercy of the Sacred Heart.

“I was sent, at the age of twelve, to an excellent and fashionable boarding-school, where the teachers were a pattern of devotedness and zeal. But the spirit of darkness, who crept into the Garden of Eden, crept also into our dear institute. I was the one chosen

by it to fall into its snares, and from a little angel was soon transformed into a veritable little fiend. It was sufficient to speak of confession, holy communion, or even to mention the name of God, to make me scoff and laugh at what was said. One day after my music-lesson, weary of the repeated remonstrances of my teacher, I exclaimed in a mocking tone: 'Satan, I give you my heart; come and take possession of it—it shall be ever yours.' From that moment I never knew what it was to have a single hour of happiness. Satan was indeed my master, and left me no peace. I no longer loved God or the saints, but there was still a spark of affection left for our blessed Lady. Remorse tormented me, but I had not the courage to reveal to any one the torture I was enduring. A lady who took great interest in me and watched me closely, could not help exclaiming, on hearing

me laugh: 'That is not the laugh of a human being, but of a devil.' She was not mistaken.

"At last one of my friends, in the hopes of bringing about my conversion, proposed to me to join with her in making a novena to the Sacred Heart. Through the mediation of our blessed Lady, and for the sake of Our Lady, I consented. From the very first day I felt a change had taken place in me. I was no longer the same being, and on the last day of the novena Mass was said in honor of the Sacred Heart to obtain my conversion. Since then God has continued His work of mercy in my behalf. I am now, through a good confession, reconciled to Him and I intend consecrating the remainder of my life to that dear Saviour whose enemy I have been for the last eight weary years. Oh, pray for me, pray for me."

38.—“Come unto Me, all ye who are Weary and Heavily Laden.”

On the eve of Corpus Christi a pious lady, who was aware of the sad state of the soul of one of her friends, made him promise to say every day for nine days one “Glory be to the Father,” with the ejaculation: “Sweet Heart of Jesus, I implore Thee to make me love Thee more and more.” The promise made was faithfully kept. On the first day of the novena the gentleman in question felt a gentle peace stealing over him, instead of the pangs of remorse of conscience, which till then had tormented him. On the third day he was seized with the desire to go to church, in order to implore pardon and help from God, and when there was so filled with contrition for the sins of his past life, that he asked to see a priest, made his peace with God, and on leaving the confes-

sional seemed so intoxicated with joy at now being reconciled to Him, after having been for so many years His enemy, that he was heard to exclaim: "Oh, how boundless are Thy mercies, my Jesus!"

39.—The Disposer of Hearts.

We had admitted into our reformatory, at the request of her parents (highly respectable people), a young girl, whose conversion was looked on as hopeless by all who knew her. For the first nine months of her stay with us she opposed us in everything, and for the sake of the other children it became our imperative duty to send her back to her unhappy parents as incorrigible. On the day fixed for her departure the thought suddenly struck us to take her to pay a farewell visit to the Blessed Sacrament. For once we met with no opposition. She followed

us to the chapel, where, after kneeling for a little time, fearing, as is often the case, she might get tired, we recited the Lord's Prayer aloud in honor of the Sacred Heart, and had begun the little ejaculation: "Sweetest Heart of Jesus," when, in a voice full of anguish, such as never can be forgotten, she cried out, "Have mercy on me." God's grace had touched this poor benighted soul, and we left her for some little time near the Sacred Heart to recover her composure. On quitting the chapel she earnestly implored to be allowed to remain with us, as she was now fully resolved, with the help of God's grace, to begin a new life. Gladly indeed did we grant her request. As soon as she returned to the school-room she at once, to the astonishment of the children, resumed the work she had not even touched for a week, intent on the desire to prepare herself to make a good confession. She has

ever since continued, to our great edification, in these good dispositions, and yesterday had the happiness to receive for the first time in many years the Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar. After holy communion she was bathed in tears, and declares she has never been so happy since the day she received our dear Lord for the first time.

May the Sacred Heart give her the grace of perseverance! We have every reason to hope He will, for she is now our joy and consolation, a pattern to all the other children.

40.—A Mother's Tears Wiped Away.

A poor mother, as sometimes happens in families, had among her sons one of those ne'er-do-wells, who are a constant source of anxiety and misery to all belonging to them.

Finding the restraint of home not

congenial to his tastes, the youth soon left it, in order to have full liberty to give vent to his vicious habits in a distant city, paying only rare and short visits to his family when compelled by necessity. In the meantime the unhappy mother never lost her confidence in the power of the Sacred Heart, and besieged heaven with her prayers to grant the conversion of her wretched son, hoping even when hope seemed hopeless.

Last Lent the youth returned home, and informed his mother it was his intention to spend a longer time than usual with her. This in itself was a consolation, and she redoubled her prayers to the Sacred Heart in his behalf. As the time for fulfilling the Easter duties was drawing to an end, she even ventured to speak to him about the necessity of approaching the sacraments, but to no purpose. On the eve of Low Sunday the mother and

one of her daughters, living with her, went to confession. This came to the knowledge of the wretched youth, who, as soon as they returned home, received them with a torrent of abuse, behaving more like a lunatic than a man in his right senses. As they were about to receive the Blessed Sacrament neither of them made any reply. Their silence must have made an impression on the poor sinner, for on entering the church next morning, to the mother's great surprise and joy, she saw her son kneeling near a confessional, and afterwards receive holy communion. Since this time the prodigal has changed for the better in many ways, which proves he had received the sacraments in good dispositions.

41.—The Triumph of the Sacred Heart in Dalmatia.

The people in this country are full of religious feeling and faith, but are prone to allow themselves to be led away by the desire for revenge. This is the result of their intercourse with the schismatic Greeks living among them, and with their Turkish neighbors, who consider revenge a duty. If a quarrel takes place among them and an injury is committed, the wrong is considered as done to the whole family, and the two families will be estranged from each other, till the injured party has had his revenge, or satisfaction has been obtained. The missionaries are constantly preaching against this vice and using every means in their power to extirpate it.

In 1855 the Rev. Fathers Carrara and Basil were sent to preach a mis-

sion at Zara, in Dalmatia. One morning a stranger asked to see Father Basil. "Father," said he to the priest, "help me, for my life is in danger." "How so?" asked the missionary. "When I was young I had the misfortune to quarrel with a gentleman belonging to a village close by; from words it came to blows, and in an unlucky moment I slew him. I got twenty years in the galleys for my crime, but this punishment has not satisfied the family of the murdered man. Two years ago, at the expiration of my term of imprisonment, I returned to my village, and since then my life is one of constant terror and danger. Do, pray, Father, take pity on me and help me." "My son," replied the missionary, "God alone can do that." The poor wretch persisted in his importunities, and the Father promised to do all in his power to bring about a reconciliation. The priest with whom the

missionary was staying, on hearing who had called, shook his head, and told him such a thing was impossible, as many had attempted it before and failed. "Certainly it would be impossible for me," replied the Father, "did I rely on my own strength, but I mean to confide the whole matter to the Sacred Heart and with the blessing of God I feel certain of success." The following day he started on his errand of mercy, accompanied by the chief of the village, carrying a parcel containing two pictures, one of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the other of the immaculate heart of Mary. On reaching the house of the injured family he asked to see the master of the house, and was shown into the rooms of the sons of the murdered man. "I am come to bless you, your family and all your possessions." These words were received with joy and gratitude, and the missionary, taking advantage

of the favorable impression he had made, added: "You will receive the blessing not from me, but from the hearts of Jesus and Mary," at the same time showing the pictures to the two brothers, who, overcome with joy, fell at the feet of the priest. "But," continued the missionary, "before these hearts will bless you, I have to make a condition in their name to which you must consent." "Father, what is it? We are ready to consent to anything, in order to obtain such a blessing, are we not?" said the elder son, turning to his brother. "The Sacred Heart requires you to pardon your father's murderer." Hardly were the words uttered before the elder one, who had been the most determined in his desire for revenge, throwing up his arms exclaimed: "Where is he, so that we may take him to our hearts?" Everybody present was taken by surprise at this sudden

change. The missionary at once sent for the poor culprit, who was anxiously waiting the result of the interview. On entering the house he prostrated himself on the ground, as is customary in such cases, and greeted the brothers with the usual salutation: "Praise be to Jesus Christ." Then he asked permission to come in. This given, he entered the apartment, repeating the same formula, adding, "May I come nearer?" On receiving a similar permission, he approached the elder son, as the head of the family. The ceremony being repeated a third time, he asked, "Is the reconciliation accomplished?" At these words the injured man opened his arms, and embraced him as a friend.* There was not a dry eye among all those who witnessed

* In Dalmatia this form of reconciliation has to be repeated before each member of the injured family, even to the youngest child, otherwise the reconciliation between the two parties would not be considered complete, and any one member of the family being absent, even if only a child, would be considered fully entitled to demand reparation from the offender.

this touching sight. The missionary in his turn, pointing to the picture of the Sacred Heart, said: "Now that you are reconciled to each other, you must also ask pardon from the Sacred Heart, the one for his terrible crime, the other for having so long harbored thoughts of revenge."

After the ceremony of making peace was over, the Father encouraged all present to be faithful to the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and enjoined them to live at peace with one another. As for the culprit, he could not conceal his happiness, and said to the family of the deceased: "I have managed, during my long imprisonment, to save thirty-two dollars, which I now offer in alms for Masses to be said for the soul of the man I had the misfortune to kill." "No," replied the elder brother, "it is our duty to care for the soul of our father; the money shall be employed in buying two handsome

frames for the pictures of the sacred hearts, which shall be hung in the church as an everlasting memorial of our reconciliation, and as an encouragement for others to follow our example." This proposal met with the universal approbation of all present. Before leaving, Father Basil again blessed the house and partook of a light repast, the new friend of the brothers sitting between them. Both parties followed the missionary's injunctions, and approached the Sacraments of Penance and of the Altar, after which they again publicly renewed in the church their promise to live in peace and good understanding with each other.

This reconciliation had the happiest results, for many in the village who were at variance followed the example set by the brothers.

42.—Triple Interest.

A few days before the feast of the Sacred Heart a farmer called upon his parish priest, begging him to accept three dollars of his savings to help to decorate the chapel of the Sacred Heart. The priest told him to take it to the schoolmaster. Thanks to this generous gift, the little chapel looked lovely on the feast-day, but none were more pleased than the poor man, who almost wept for joy. Anything done in honor of the Sacred Heart is certain sooner or later to meet with its reward, and such was the case with our good man. Whilst walking through his fields in the afternoon he noticed a swarm of bees buzzing, and soon the queen bee settled on one of his trees. He immediately sent for a hive, and the swarm was secured. "Oh, how good is the Sacred Heart!" exclaimed the

grateful peasant, "to repay me so liberally for the little I gave to it. Next year I shall give enough to make the chapel look more beautiful than it does to-day."

43.—Martyred for Love of the Sacred Heart.

During the time of the great French Revolution, when so many innocent persons were put to death, a nobleman and his wife and daughter were taken prisoners. The father was immediately guillotined for harboring a priest in his house, and the mother and daughter, who were accused of distributing pictures of the Sacred Heart to the peasantry near their chateau, perished on the scaffold. If we, like these holy martyrs, wish to show our love to the Sacred Heart, we also must be prepared to pass through the fiery furnace of suffering.

44.—The Widow and the Sacred Heart.

A poor widow, a devout client of the Sacred Heart, seeing that the frost in the early spring had done great damage in several places, promised to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, and publish it in *The Messenger*, if the frost did not injure her trees. Her prayer was heard, and she never before had such a fine crop of fruit. That same year one of her sons fell ill, and as the doctor declared he was not in danger, and that it was not necessary to administer the last sacraments to him, he refused to receive them, greatly to the distress of his pious mother. On leaving the sick-room she at once went and knelt before a picture of the Sacred Heart, promising to have a Mass said and to make a novena in honor of the Sacred Heart in thanksgiving, if her child received the sacraments be-

fore his death. On returning to the room the sick boy of his own accord asked to be anointed. His mother at once sent for a priest, and in less than an hour and a half he had received all the rites of the Church. It was none too soon, for ten minutes after the priest left him he was dead.

At the beginning of autumn this same poor widow's only surviving son was placed on the conscription list at the mayor's office. This, unfortunately, she discovered too late to make an appeal to exempt him from military service, as she, being a widow, needed his assistance, and he was forced to go. She at once had recourse to the Sacred Heart, and promised to make a novena in its honor if her son was released from service. A few days after, to her great joy, he came home, and declared he could not understand how he had been exempted.

45.—The Sick Priest.

A priest, an exile in Switzerland, writing to *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, says: "Would that all suffering humanity would call upon and seek help from the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the immaculate heart of Mary, for I can bear witness, by experience, that it would not be in vain. I had been seriously injured by a fall, which caused me to suffer so intensely in my head that I was perfectly unable to attend to my duties. Finding medical assistance of no avail, I determined to make a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the immaculate heart of Mary, not with the object of being cured, but only to obtain a little relief, in order to enable me to bear my sufferings patiently, if it was God's will for me to live. I also promised, if my prayer was heard, to have the pictures of the Sacred

Heart of Jesus and of the immaculate heart of Mary placed in Our Lady's chapel, and to promote as far as lay in my power the devotion to these two hearts. During the last two months, although not free from pain, it is bearable and I hasten to fulfil my promise by asking you to insert my case in *The Messenger*."

46.—The Sacred Heart assists an Afflicted Mother.

One of my relatives, writes a lady, although educated in a convent, married a Protestant gentleman, and agreed that the children should be brought up in his religion. Some time afterwards, but too late, she found out her mistake. Regrets were unavailing. At last the wretched mother obtained her husband's consent for her eldest daughter to go to a Catholic school at Freiburg, provided

she was admitted gratuitously. Unfortunately she could find no such school on these conditions. A friend and relative of the mother determined to ask the Sacred Heart's assistance, and what she wanted was soon obtained. The Protestant father himself took his little daughter, ten years old, who had already been secretly instructed in the Catholic religion, to the convent, and afterwards permitted her two younger sisters to assist at the religious instructions.

47.—Threefold Results of the Apostleship of Prayer.

Not far from where I lived, says a correspondent, a relative of mine married a Protestant, on condition that all the children should be brought up in the Catholic faith.

Some years afterwards she found out the mistake she had made in con-

tracting a mixed marriage, and did all in her power to obtain her husband's conversion, but in vain.

The death of all her sons, who died young, rendered her husband melancholy and morose. She had, however, after seventeen years of persevering prayer the happiness to see him become a fervent Catholic, whose sole ambition was now centred in the conversion of his brother and aged father, both of whom were stanch Protestants. Humanly speaking, there seemed to be no chance of it. But the Sacred Heart is all powerful when called upon.

Deserted by their Protestant friends and relatives in the hour of adversity, they sought refuge at the door of the Catholic son and brother, who welcomed them with open arms. A short time afterwards they were received into the Church, the old father being past eighty.

48.—The Sacred Heart and the Flood.

During the last few days, says a dweller on the banks of the Rhine, the river rose to such a height as I never remember having seen before, and I became quite alarmed about the safety of our tenants and the injury it would do to my business. Knowing the power of the Sacred Heart, I at once began a novena to this Divine Heart, the immaculate heart of Mary and to St. Joseph, promising also a Mass in thanksgiving and publication in *The Messenger*, if our house was not injured by the water. I then told the hearts of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother that I placed everything under their care and held them responsible. Of course, we, on our part, took every precaution. At last the water reached our door and then receded, all of a sudden, as if stopped. We were saved. It is impossible for

me to describe our feelings, or our gratitude to the Sacred Heart.

49.—A Bad Foot Cured.

Last June I suffered such intense pain in my right knee-joint and foot as to render it impossible for me to walk, the least exertion causing the knee to swell and become discolored. After trying every possible remedy, and finding medical assistance of no avail, I had recourse to the Sacred Heart. Two months passed, but I was no better. There was, however, after my promising to make a novena to the Sacred Heart and publication in *The Messenger*, such a marked improvement in my condition that I was able to walk and resume my duties. On October 14th the pain returned in all its intensity, and after a consultation held by the doctors, they declared nothing could be done and that I must

remain a cripple all my life. No one can understand my anguish at the thought of being a burden to our community whilst still in the prime of life, and I at once determined to implore the Sacred Heart to have compassion on me, and asked Our Lady and St. Joseph to join with me in making a novena to the Sacred Heart, promising if I got well to have the news published in *The Messenger*. Thanks to this Divine Heart, I am now on the road to recovery, and am able to go back to my dear little children, who have prayed so much for me.

50.—The Sacred Heart, the Almighty Physician.

For more than two years I had been longing to consecrate myself to God in a religious house. Just as I was about entering one, I became so ill that there seemed to be no chance for me.

Everything that could be done to cure me was tried without success. Full of confidence in the Sacred Heart, I began a novena in its honor, and that of the immaculate heart of Mary, promising, did I recover, to publish the fact in *The Messenger*. Our Lord treated me as if wanting to completely wean me from the world. All I now desired was to place everything in the hands of God, for Him to dispose of me as He willed, having no other desire but His good pleasure in everything, and this is what I constantly asked of the Sacred Heart. My health has for the last few weeks greatly improved, and the pain is abating. I have therefore every reason to hope that, thanks to the Sacred Heart, I shall soon be able to enter the convent. God grant that my devotion to this divine protector may daily increase.

51.—Drawn out of a Deep Well.

A poor woman had for nine months not only been very ill, but suffering from interior trials, which had weakened her intellect. One day she begged her husband to kill her with an ax, and when he refused she rushed out of the house and jumped into a deep well. Her little son of four years old, seeing what his mother had done, ran back to the house to tell his sister what had happened, and the poor woman was pulled out more dead than alive. On recovering consciousness she at once asked to see a priest, saying that the Sacred Heart, who had once before helped her, could do so a second time. I was immediately sent for, and found her in a deplorable state of mind. On seeing me she said: "Is it true, your reverence, that it would be a sin for me to destroy myself,

when I could thus gain release from all my misery?" "Oh, yes, it would be a great sin," I replied; "you did not give yourself your life; and neither you nor any one else has a right to take it away; it would be committing a mortal sin." "The pain is unbearable." "In hell it will be much worse. The Sacred Heart can and will help you if you only ask it." I then inscribed all the family in the Apostleship of Prayer, and bade them make a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Lady, and St. Joseph. Very shortly afterward the poor woman recovered, went to confession, received holy communion, and begged an account of her extraordinary cure to be sent to *The Messenger*. She has since made a promise to approach the sacraments every year on the anniversary of her throwing herself into the well.

52.—A Priest in America Cured of Sore Throat.

About the commencement of 1882 I got a severe sore throat, which threatened me with the complete loss of my voice. This was a serious thing, owing to the scarcity of priests in that part of the country. During the month of March the inflammation increased so much that recovery seemed very doubtful, and the doctors, finding they could do nothing for me, strongly advised me to seek a warmer climate. I therefore left the North and went to Arkansas. The change of air did not mend matters, and at Christmas I began a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the immaculate heart of Mary, and to St. Joseph, in which I was joined by the good Sisters of St. Joseph, and several members of my parish. Before the novena was ended I was able to re-

sume my duties and preach a short sermon to my people. During the whole of Lent, in spite of the extra work at this holy season, I continued better, and it was only after Easter I had a slight relapse caused by over-exertion. I have now every reason to hope that it will please God to permit me to labor for some time longer for the salvation of souls.

53.—A Sick Mother Cured.

The following was sent to the uncle of the writer, asking him to get it published in *The Messenger* in thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart:

“Dearest Uncle:—Join with me in praising and blessing the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the immaculate heart of Mary, for I have reason to be grateful to them this Easter, since they have given me back my beloved mother, who has been lately at death’s

door. Owing to the unhealthiness of the present season, a kind of epidemic has broken out in our town, carrying off both old and even little children in a very short time. The malady begins with cold shiverings, accompanied by high fever, which does not prevent the patient becoming deathly cold at the extremities; this is followed by numbness in the limbs, severe coughing, spitting of blood and inflammation of the respiratory organs, resulting in death at about the end of three days. On the 15th of March I had been obliged to go to N—— upon business, and only returned home in the evening. The weather was so severe on my way back that I was stopped on the road for more than an hour by the snow, and did not reach our house before nine, worn out and almost frozen to death. On coming in I found my mother sitting near the stove, shivering with cold. ‘Ah!’ said she, ‘I

hardly expected you home in such weather; I am so glad you are come; I am perished with cold and feel miserably ill.' Seeing her condition, I forgot all fatigue and hastened to get her a cup of hot coffee, and put her to bed. Towards midnight, although in high fever, her limbs and feet were deathly cold, and nothing could get them warm. As soon as we knew she was in danger, she, of course, received the last sacraments, but in spite of this, at the end of three days, every hope of her recovery was gone, and we were expecting every moment to be her last. In my anguish I fell on my knees before a picture of the Sacred Heart, imploring Our Lord and Our Lady immaculate to spare my mother. I cannot tell how long I remained in prayer; I should think about half an hour. On going to my mother's bedside, I found her sleeping as quietly as an infant. When

she awoke, three hours afterwards, she declared she felt quite well. She is still very weak, but gaining strength every day, and I hope, dearest uncle, to be able to tell you in my next letter that she is quite recovered."

54.—How and Where a Priest found Peace.

If the maladies of the body are painful, they are nothing in comparison to those of the soul. For months I had been suffering from severe desolation, and dryness, sufficient to make any one go out of his senses. I had vainly implored the sacred and the immaculate heart of Mary to give me a little respite from my sufferings, and even offered up the Holy Sacrifice for that intention. Seeing no relief came, I determined in my despair to begin a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the immaculate heart of

Mary, with a promise of publication in *The Messenger*, did the longed-for succor come.

Hardly had I made the promise and begun the novena before peace returned to my soul.

May all priests in their difficulties persevere in having recourse to the Sacred Heart of Jesus!

55.—How a Workman found Employment and was Cured of the Sin of Anger.

I have been several times out of work for three or four months at a time. As I live with my mother and have a very bad temper, she thought it was through my own fault, and she fretted so much about it that at last she became ill. One day after reading *The Messenger*, I determined to beg of the Sacred Heart to help me, as it had already helped so many.

Thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, I am now in an excellent situation; my employer is so pleased with me that he has already raised my wages twice in six months, and I trust, with the help of this Divine Heart, not only soon to be a good salesman, but to conquer my passionate temper, which is improving, and in this way be a consolation to my dear mother.

56.—How Innocence comes to Light.

In 1881 my brother, who is a tradesman, innocently became mixed up with a fraudulent concern. The real culprit had run away before my brother was arrested, which caused the trial to be delayed. My family were greatly distressed at the long imprisonment of my brother, as they feared it would kill him or ruin his health, and wrote asking my assistance. I had immediate recourse to

the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the immaculate heart of Mary, knowing that only they could assist me. A short time after my brother wrote informing me that the real culprit had surrendered himself, and that the trial was about to take place. Very shortly afterward I received another letter from my brother, telling me he was acquitted. I at once knelt down to thank the Sacred Heart, before whose statue I had, on the day of the trial, placed a lighted candle, and I also had a Mass of thanksgiving said next morning.

57.—How the Last Journey to Eternity can be Rendered Easy.

Shortly after my ordination, owing to the illness of my rector, the burden of a large parish, to which I had recently been appointed curate, fell on my shoulders. Knowing how inex-

perienced I was in parish matters, I naturally felt the task beyond my power. I therefore placed it under the care of the Sacred Heart, and more especially the sick, whom I strongly urged to have recourse to this Divine Heart, either to obtain their recovery or the grace to bear their sufferings patiently. This plan succeeded admirably, and I have the consolation to know that during the whole time I was working alone, not one of the parishioners died without receiving the sacraments, and some of them several times, which I attribute entirely to the loving care of the Sacred Heart.

58.—How a Family in Debt were Assisted.

Having the misfortune to fall into debt, and being the father of a large family, I naturally became very anxious about our future. We had for

many years been subscribers to *The Messenger*, and my wife and myself determined to ask the Sacred Heart to extricate us out of our difficulties. All of us, the children included, began to pray to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, St. Joseph, and St. Anthony of Padua to help us, for we were daily expecting the bailiffs to come and take possession of everything belonging to us, which they at last did.

Just before the sale was to take place a friend, whom I had in my days of prosperity assisted, offered to pay my debts; but the creditors, thinking they would make a good thing out of the sale, refused, under the plea that it was too late to be put off. It, therefore, took place. To the great annoyance of the creditors, my kind benefactor stepped in, and offered a price which enabled me not only to pay them to the last farthing, but also to start business again.

**59.—The Sacred Heart can Soften
People's Hearts.**

Last year I made a novena to the Sacred Heart, and sent *The Annals of the Holy Childhood* to five of my rich relatives, hoping that each of them would forward some money to the missionaries for the purchase of a heathen child. Two of them have already done so, and two others have promised to send me in their donation, so it is certain we shall have four little souls snatched from the devil and idolatry.

**60.—How the Sacred Heart Procured
the Money to pay for a Statue to
be placed in a Church.**

It has always been my desire to encourage as much as is in my power the devotion to the Sacred Heart

among my parishioners. For this, it is necessary to have either a picture or a statue in the church. My people being very poor, I did not know how it would be possible to find sufficient money to purchase such, and one morning whilst thinking about it, I determined that all the alms given to me for Masses should be devoted to that object. I also promised inwardly to pray for all those who helped, and to publish the account in *The Messenger*. The same day I received from a most unexpected quarter one-fourth of the required sum, and we have now, thanks to the Sacred Heart, not only a beautiful statue, but also money enough to decorate the altar.

61.—Praise from the Lips of a Child.

My dear mother was threatened with blindness, and had, last August, to spend three days in the eye infir-

mary at Munich. The doctors told her if there were no improvement she would have to return on the 10th of September to undergo an operation, as this was the only chance of saving her sight. When she returned home she, at first, tried to help us a little in the housework, but was soon obliged to give it up. We were all very unhappy, and sometimes I could not help crying, especially when the time for her to leave us drew near; but even then I would say to God: "Dear, good God, you are Almighty, and if you like you can not only help our mother by giving her back her eyesight, but also in a great many other ways." We made a novena to the Sacred Heart, and see how good our dear Lord was! On the Sunday before she was to return to the hospital, she went to Mass with us, and suddenly after the Gospel, she whispered to me that she could see

quite well. When I told the news to our priest he said it was indeed wonderful. As for mother, she can hardly believe it herself. We are going to have Mass said every year in thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart for this great blessing, and also to beg of God that love and confidence in this Divine Heart may increase more and more.

62.—A Happy Death.

About four weeks ago, a youth belonging to a wealthy and pious family at S——— died in the hospital, of consumption. He had, unfortunately, after making his first communion, been sent to one of those public schools where no attention is paid to religion, and soon forgot the lessons he had learned in his infancy. A stay of several years in Paris, spent in dissipation, soon completed his ruin, and like

the prodigal son, he returned a beggar, to die in the hospital of his native city. For eight long months he never missed an opportunity of scoffing and laughing at religion, much to the annoyance of the other patients, and of the Sisters in charge of the hospital. These good women did all in their power to soften his hardened heart, constantly imploring the Sacred Heart to take pity on him, and Our Lady and the other saints to intercede for him. At Easter they redoubled their prayers, and tried, but in vain, to persuade him to make his peace with God. "There's nothing to confess; my conscience does not torment me," he scoffingly said to them.

The Sisters in charge of his ward, having tried to induce him to wear a medal of Our Lady of Victory, were received in such a way that they felt nothing could be done but to pray for one so hardened in sin. In this they

persevered, making novena after novena, even when every chance of conversion seemed lost.

At last a ray of hope dawned. They noticed that, although he never failed to treat them with the greatest disrespect, he would, on very rare occasions, it is true, show that he pitied his fellow sufferers to the extent even of some little acts of generosity on his part.

Towards the middle of August, his state became so critical that the Sisters begged the young man who nursed him to inform him of his danger, and to try to persuade him to see a priest. This task the nurse gladly undertook to do, and greatly to his astonishment the sick man replied: "But if I make a confession it will only be to Father N——, who prepared me for my first communion."

No one ever expected he would do it, but it was thought best to send for

the priest. He was, however, in earnest; as soon as the priest came he made his confession and received the sacraments with the greatest devotion. From that time, and during the month he still lingered on he was perfectly changed, and became an object of the greatest edification to all by his gentleness, patience and resignation, ever grateful for the least service rendered to him, and never uttering a word of complaint during the long, weary nights of intense suffering. He seemed to be absorbed in prayer. During the last three days of his life, his crucifix was never out of his hand. Even when the doctor, a Protestant, came to see him, he appeared to be thinking of it more than of the questions which the physician put to him. He died kissing the crucifix, and his last words were, "Jesus, Mary."

This conversion was a cause of great edification, not only in the hos-

pital, but in the whole city, where the deceased was well known, and the Sisters, in their gratitude to the Sacred Heart, hastened to have the account of it published in *The Messenger*.

63.—Three Petitions Granted by the Sacred Heart.

I.

We have been for many years subscribers to *The Messenger*, and seeing how many petitions have been granted by this Divine Heart, I determined to ask for the cure of my little brother.

My youngest brother, even as a child, suffered greatly from his eyes. At the age of thirteen, not only was it impossible for him to go to school, but our own medical man, finding he could do nothing to relieve him, advised my father to place him under the

care of a specialist. This succeeded no better, and the oculist informed my parents that nothing remained but to send him to the eye infirmary. This was a heavy trial for us, as we were in straitened circumstances at the time. How many novenas we had already made to the Sacred Heart I cannot tell. As the eldest of ten children I knew the distress of my poor parents, so I determined, as soon as my brother had left us, to let the Sacred Heart have no peace till I had obtained what I wanted and I promised publication in *The Messenger*. This time my prayer has been heard. At the end of four days my brother returned home, not perfectly cured, it is true, but we have every reason to hope he will be able to resume his studies in the autumn.

II.

In a previous letter to *The Messenger* I asked for the cure of my young-

est brother to be published; to-day I have to thank the Sacred Heart for two other great favors.

During the last autumn business had not only been bad, but owing to the sudden death of one of my father's creditors, the heirs demanded immediate repayment of the capital lent to my parents, and a summons had been issued against us by some relatives of ours for payment of money left them in a will. In spite of this accumulation of troubles, my dear parents never lost their confidence in the Sacred Heart, which had so often assisted them in their difficulties. During the month of October they made every one of their children and the people in our house say together every evening the rosary, and ask the Sacred Heart to come to our assistance. Their trust in God was rewarded, for by the 12th of November my father was enabled to arrange every-

thing to the satisfaction of all concerned.

III.

My parents were anxious for my brother, who had failed to pass his examination last year, to make a second attempt this autumn. Unfortunately the reports sent us by his teacher were far from satisfactory, as he had only begun to work seriously at the last moment. A second failure was therefore all that we could reasonably expect. My parents, knowing how much depended upon this examination, made us, three weeks before the time fixed for it, pray to the Sacred Heart for this intention. On the day of the examination, we all received holy communion and promised to make a pilgrimage to a shrine of Our Lady. The same afternoon, thanks to the Sacred Heart, we received a telegram announcing he had passed.

64.—A Happy Death.

In November, 1883, a gentleman, already advanced in years, thanks to his sister's prayers to the Sacred Heart, became reconciled to the Church on his death-bed, and had the happiness of receiving the last sacraments. He had had the misfortune to lose his parents in early infancy, and after finishing his education in a Catholic family, left Europe and settled in America. Here he married a Protestant lady and embraced her religion. As soon as his sister, a constant reader of *The Messenger*, heard the sad news, she never ceased petitioning the Sacred Heart, till she obtained his conversion and had the consolation to see him die a most happy death. May this encourage others to persevere in praying to the Sacred Heart in their difficulties.

65.—Thanksgiving.

A nun sends the following account of an accident, requesting it to be published in *The Messenger*: On the 21st of September I met with a very serious accident, by which my right eye was almost pulled out of its socket. Putting my hand up to my bleeding eye, I cried out: "I am blind." The oculist, who was sent for at once, declared that the sight of the injured eye was lost, and nothing remained but to try to save the other. I immediately began with our Sisters and the children to pray to the Sacred Heart, but for two months I suffered intense agony, and the left eye became so inflamed that all hopes of saving my sight were given up. Finding the doctors, in spite of all their care, could do nothing, I said to the Sacred Heart: "You can, if you like, cure me, and permit me to be of use to the com-

munity and the school; but do what you like with me, and if you think best, I will sit in some corner and pray and knit." The inflammation has since then left my eye, and with the aid of glasses, made on purpose, I have been able to resume my duties in the school-room. I cannot express how grateful I am to the Sacred Heart for this great blessing.

66.—Success of a Mission.

The parish priest of the little town of N——, seeing that owing to the great prevalence of typhus fever and diphtheria the mission which was to take place in the course of the year would have to be postponed, determined, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of our blessed Lady, to ask her to obtain from the Sacred Heart that his parishioners should not be deprived of so great a blessing,

promising to have the litany of the Sacred Heart said after the rosary in the evening and publication in *The Messenger* if his prayer was heard. The mission has been most successful, and followed by the most gratifying results.

67.—Help at the Right Time.

One afternoon in March I was sent to see a man whom I had frequently visited in the hospital, but whose state the doctor till then had not pronounced dangerous. On reaching the ward where the sick man lay, I was informed he was suffering from acute inflammation of the lungs, and that he had not twenty-four hours to live. I at once went to his bedside, in the hopes of making him understand the critical state he was in, and of getting him to make his confession. Nothing could induce him to do so. The

only reply I obtained, and I knew what that meant, was: "I shall go to confession in the church when I get well." I then pointed out to him that the sacraments not only cured the soul, but also the body. It was all in vain; even the terrible truths of religion did not frighten him. "I have lived twenty-four years abroad, and I have been ill several times. I shall settle my business with God without any one's interference." He then began to swear and blaspheme in a manner that made me shudder. I now found out with whom I had to deal, and left persuaded that nothing remained but to place the poor sinner under the protection of Our Lady and to implore the Sacred Heart to have compassion on him. I therefore left him and went to the chapel. There, kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, I promised to make a novena to the Sacred Heart and to have his conversion published

in *The Messenger*. After this I at once returned to the ward where the sick man lay. The Sister in charge told me she had at last persuaded him to wear a medal of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and to hold a crucifix in his hand. "The victory is ours," I said, and I once more tried to induce him to make his peace with God. It was only a repetition of what had taken place before—nothing but cursing and blaspheming. In his fury he threw away the crucifix. Seeing this, I thought it more prudent to retire to another room, where I remained till four o'clock the next morning, when I again went to see if there were any hope of a change. Alas, he was just in the same state of mind. I therefore left him to say Mass in the chapel dedicated to Our Lady, Help of Christians, and again earnestly recommended him to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady and St. Joseph, whose feast was

the following day. After this I went home, telling the Sister in charge to send at once for me if I was wanted. Just as I was about sitting down to my dinner, one of the boys from the school attached to the hospital came running in to me, saying: "Father, the man in the hospital is dying, and asking for you." I at once went and found him in his last agony, trembling at the judgment awaiting him. Again I asked him: "Will you make your confession? You can do so in a few words." "Oh, yes, Father," he replied, pressing the crucifix convulsively to his lips. He lived long enough to make a full confession, with every sign of the sincerest contrition, and humbly begged to receive the Holy Viaticum, but as he was sinking fast I thought it best to anoint him and give him the last blessing. I had hardly finished the prayer for the dying before he expired.

68.—Converted on His Death-bed.

I must thank the Sacred Heart for giving a young man the grace to receive the last sacraments on his death-bed. He was the son of a wealthy hotel keeper, and after leaving school had led a wandering and dissipated life. He was at last compelled to return home, having fallen ill of consumption, and I was sent for to prepare him to receive the last sacraments. Knowing the kind of man I had to deal with, I felt the first thing to be done was to try and make him like my society. I therefore, at first, rarely spoke of religion, only dropping a word from time to time as if accidentally. We became by degrees very good friends, and he seemed to look forward to my visits. I thought I could now safely ask him to make his Easter duties. This he tried to put off, under the pretext he would

soon be well enough to receive the sacraments in the church. His mother, seeing I had failed, tried to use her influence, but only met with a decided "No." I now changed my tactics, and had recourse to the Sacred Heart. The next morning his sister came to fetch me, saying her brother wanted me to hear his confession. I immediately went to see him, and after I had given him absolution, I tried to persuade him to receive the last sacraments. This he would not at first hear of, not believing he was so ill, and it was only after a hard battle I at last succeeded in inducing him to do so.

69.—Conversion of an Old Sinner.

A young girl who was staying at our institution, which is intended to provide a temporary home for servants out of situations, was found one day by one of the Sisters weeping bitterly.

On being asked what was the matter she replied she was very unhappy about her father, who had not approached the sacraments for thirty-three years, and who was now lying dangerously ill in the hospital. The poor girl had done everything in her power, in spite of his ill usage of her, to obtain his conversion, having had Masses said constantly for him, as well as making novenas to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady, but in vain. She had frequently been to see him since he was ill in the hospital, but neither she nor any one else could induce him to see a priest, and he declared with an oath that he would not let one of them come near him, for he could die without their assistance. The nun, full of pity for her, strongly urged her to place her trust in the Sacred Heart and to make a promise to have his conversion, if obtained, published in *The Messenger*. The girl immediately fol

lowed this advice, and at once made the promise, and began a novena to the Sacred Heart. On the third day of the novena, she felt quite happy about her father. Not daring to go to see him for fear of being sent away, as she had been on a previous occasion, she asked a friend to pay him a visit, and to try to discover what were his present dispositions. When her friend went to see the sick man she managed to slip a little picture of the Mater Admirabilis under his pillow, whilst talking to him. The old man was completely changed; not only did he seem pleased to see his visitor, but listened patiently to all she said to him, and asked her to send a priest to him the next morning to hear his confession. Before his death his daughter had the consolation of seeing him receive the last sacraments with the greatest devotion.

**70.—Delivered by the Sacred Heart
from Doubts of Faith.**

A pious lady belonging to our parish had been forced much against her will to read one of those books so pernicious to the faith. In spite of herself she was so tormented by thoughts and doubts against our holy religion, that for two years she was unable to make a single meditation. At last she had recourse to the Sacred Heart, promising, if she was delivered from this state of doubt and spiritual dryness, to publish the fact in *The Messenger*. Thanks to the Sacred Heart and to the intercession of Our Lady, she is now free from this spiritual trial.

71.—Conversion of a Protestant Mother.

A Catholic Prussian official, on his death-bed, begged his Lutheran wife to become a Catholic for the sake of

his children. The wife consented, provided her husband recovered; if not, she considered it was not God's will for her to change her religion. He died, and although nothing could induce her to change her faith, she always accompanied her children to Mass, and even assisted at several missions.

Some time before Easter one of her daughters, living in Bavaria, came on a visit to her mother, and had her at once recommended to the Apostleship of Prayer, and made a novena to the Sacred Heart in her behalf. A few weeks after the young lady returned to her own home she received a letter, informing her that her mother was being instructed in the Catholic religion, and would be received into the Church on the eleventh of July, the second anniversary of her husband's death.

72.—The Sacred Heart drives away Melancholy.

It is just a year since our village was visited by a terrible storm, and two persons living in one of the farm-houses were killed by a thunderbolt. After a few months all the family except a young boy recovered from the shock caused by the sudden death of their relatives. His mother, brothers and sisters, finding nothing could arouse him from the deep melancholy in which he was plunged, determined to call upon the Sacred Heart to come to their assistance, and began a novena for this intention. The boy is now so much better that he has been able to resume his work.

73.—An Invalid Student and a Happy Death.

Last year I had a difficult examination to pass, the success of which

was most doubtful, as, owing to ill-health, I had been frequently absent from college. Knowing how greatly my future depended upon this examination, I naturally felt very nervous about the chances I had of succeeding, and mentioned my fears to one of the professors. He strongly advised me to have recourse to the Sacred Heart. I followed the good priest's advice, and immediately began a novena for this intention. Thanks to the manifest assistance I received from this Divine Heart, I succeeded in my examination better than I could reasonably have hoped. I often used to spend part of my holidays at the house of a sick relative. Every possible remedy had been tried to cure him, but to no purpose, and he was gradually fading away. One day, when thinking of him, the thought came to my mind to ask him and his family to join with me in making a novena to the Sacred

Heart, to obtain his cure, if it were God's will; if not, for him to die a happy death. All the family agreed to this proposal. The sick man died, but what a death! The priest, who was with him to the last, wrote to me as follows: "I have frequently attended the dying on their death-beds, but I have never known any one who died more peacefully or more resigned to the will of God than N——." Others who visited him during his last illness and were present at his death, declared that they would be only too glad to die if they were sure of dying as he died. Truly is the Heart of Jesus the strength of the weak, the refuge of the dying.

74.—A Late Rose.

A poor family of peasants had long wished for one of their number to become a priest, and had made many no-

venas before the picture of the Sacred Heart hung up in their little sitting-room. At last finding their prayers were not heard, they became discouraged, thinking it was not God's will. The son alone, understanding the dignity of the office to which he was aspiring, tried to encourage his parents, brothers and sisters to persevere in their prayers. His faith was rewarded. Every obstacle has been removed by degrees; he has already received the minor orders, and his now happy parents are certain that the day is not far distant when they will see their son a priest of God.

75.—Successful Examination.

I had successfully finished my seventh year in college, but owing to the delicate state of my health, caused by overwork, feared it would be impossible for me to continue my studies

much longer. In my distress, I had recourse to the Sacred Heart, asking for help. My prayer was heard. In spite of having to study very hard, and of many privations, my health continued good during the whole scholastic year, and I have, thanks to the assistance of the Sacred Heart, passed these last examinations successfully.

76.—*Saved.*

About a year ago my youngest sister made the acquaintance of a young man, whose company was far from desirable. Being a priest, I soon discovered her danger. Nothing I could say had any influence over her, and unfortunately my mother, in her too great indulgence for my sister, countenanced the friendship. Seeing there was no chance of breaking it off, I had recourse to the Sacred Heart, and

made many novenas and pilgrimages conjointly with a few intimate friends, in order to save my sister from what I knew must be the ruin of her life. Thanks to the Sacred Heart, a most desirable suitor presented himself and asked her hand in marriage. At first she demurred. On the feast of the Sacred Heart I offered up the Holy Sacrifice for her, and asked her to receive holy communion in order to obtain the grace to overcome the obstacles which she found in her way. I had a short time ago the consolation of marrying her to the gentleman we wished, and she writes telling me it is impossible for her to be happier than she is.

77.—A Death-bed Repentance.

One day, when on my way to make a sick call, I met an old woman who cried out: "Where's your reverence

going?" After I had satisfied her curiosity she said: "Since you are going to see the sick, you might as well come and see our Joe, for he's mighty bad." "It is not likely to be serious," I answered, "for he is young, and in all probability will live a long time." "Well," replied the woman, "he does not seem a likely one to die, but I tell you he'll die for all that, for he has no breath left in him." The sick man was a young giant of twenty, strong and self-willed, and one who would bear no contradiction. I did not personally know him, but had never heard anything good respecting him, and if I had consulted my own inclinations, I should certainly not have gone to see him. As it was I felt a little nervous, and inwardly implored the Sacred Heart to help me. Contrary to my expectations I was well received, and on leaving, the sick man begged me to return soon. I went every day

after this first visit to spend a few hours with him, talking of indifferent things, now and then trying to drop in a word about the patience of the saints, and, when he suffered much, about the love of the Sacred Heart. It was clear to me that with a man of his obstinate temper, the greatest prudence was necessary in my dealings with him if I wished to preserve his affection for me, and that the Sacred Heart alone could convert him.

For a few days I was unable, through stress of work, to pay him my usual visit. The poor fellow missed me, and at last I was sent for. As soon as I entered his room he humbly told me he wanted to make his confession. Any one can understand my feelings on hearing this good news. He made a general confession, lingered on for six months, suffering intensely but perfectly resigned to the will of God,

and never so happy as when he received the sacraments. He died shortly after Extreme Unction had been administered to him.

78.—Restored to Health.

A poor workman was nearly crushed to death by the falling of an immense quantity of frozen earth over the place where he had taken shelter during the blasting of some rocks in a quarry. As the doctor who attended him after the accident declared there was no chance of his recovering, some of his friends resolved to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, and made him swallow a bit of an Agnus Dei, promising, if he got well, publication in *The Messenger*. Thanks to the Sacred Heart, he has now resumed work.

79.—Employment Granted.

I have lived twenty years abroad, during which time I have only been once to see my friends. Last autumn, when in search of employment, I fell seriously ill, and had to go to the hospital. While there, some one lent me *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, and my guardian angel whispered to me to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, and to promise if I got regular employment to say one "Our Father" to this Divine Heart in thanksgiving every day for the rest of my life, and to have the favor published in *The Messenger*. I had not at the time the remotest idea of returning home, and when I went there it was much against my will. But man proposes and God disposes. Just as I was about leaving the town some kind friends offered to lend me capital enough to start business on my own account.

This I gratefully accepted, and have since had the happiness to marry an excellent wife. We are still very poor, but I am not at all anxious about our future, for I am certain the Sacred Heart, our dear Lady, and the guardian angels are watching over us.

80.—The Surest Remedy Postponed to the Last.

In the early part of the year 1875 my sister, a young girl of nineteen, lay dangerously ill of what the doctors supposed to be a tumor of the liver. Her back and feet became greatly swollen, whilst the remainder of her body was a mere skeleton. After trying every possible remedy, the doctors attending her declared the case hopeless, and she received the last sacraments. Our rector, knowing how dear she was to us, proposed, now that all earthly remedies had failed, to try and see

what the Sacred Heart would do. We at once began a novena to this Divine Heart, and the same evening noticed a small dark spot on the place where the supposed tumor was. The next day about noon our poor invalid, who was suffering greatly, begged to be lifted out of bed for a short time; and in lifting her out we broke what we have since discovered to be an abscess. In this way, thanks to the Sacred Heart, our dear sister's life was saved.

81.—Compassion of the Sacred Heart.

A celebrated physician at N—— had been ill for some time, but nothing could induce him to make his confession, and his determined refusal was a source of great grief to his family. One day, whilst his poor wife was in the sick-room, she heard the tinkling of a little bell in the streets, and on

looking out of the window, saw the Blessed Sacrament being carried to a sick person. Quite overcome at the sight, she burst into tears, and falling on her knees, exclaimed in her anguish: "I know, dear Jesus, we are unworthy that Thou shouldst enter our roof, but do pray come." Ten minutes afterward the doctor called his wife, begging of her to send for a priest, as he wanted to make his confession and receive the last sacraments. A priest was at once sent for, and administered them to him. A week afterward the sick man was gone to his eternal rest.

82.—A Sad Tale with a Joyous Ending.

A dear friend and companion of mine, although educated in a convent, had the misfortune to become an atheist. It is not easy to explain how this happened. It was, however,

probably the result of light reading, and association with a young man of no religious principles. Nothing could be more painful than to hear her speak about religion, and the contempt she had for persons consecrated to God. This was no doubt the reason why she did not live with her parents, although towards the end of her life she was on friendly terms with them.

She had been for years a constant sufferer, and at last a swelling in her throat compelled her to consult a celebrated physician, who declared that unless she underwent an operation nothing could save her life. Several of her friends, knowing the danger attending the operation, entreated her to receive the last sacraments. This she gently but firmly refused, declaring that the sacraments were of no use to her, since she did not believe in God or eternity. This decision made

us all very unhappy, for we loved her dearly, on account of her many amiable qualities, and we determined to give the Sacred Heart no peace till we had obtained the grace for her not to die under the operation. Thanks to this Divine Heart, it partly succeeded and her life was spared. She got better and was even able to resume her duties at the telegraph office. The improvement in her health did not last long. She again took to her bed, and now the disease made rapid progress. She, however, steadily set her face against all religious assistance. A priest, having once made the attempt to see her, was politely refused admittance to the sick-room. Your reverence can easily understand our feelings at the thought of the fate awaiting one we loved so dearly. We were determined, at any cost, to obtain her conversion, and enlisted our dear Lady and St. Joseph on our side, cer-

tain that the Sacred Heart would sooner work a miracle than refuse their petition and ours. We were not mistaken. God's ways are indeed wonderful. A person, who herself was far from being religiously inclined, came to visit the poor invalid, and seeing how very ill she was, succeeded in persuading her to see a priest. At my next visit I found the invalid completely changed. Her first words on my entering the room were: "I know I am going to make you nearly as happy as I am, with the good news I have to tell you. I have made my confession and received holy communion." Oh, how she edified us from that time! Her sufferings were intense, yet never a murmur escaped her lips. She seemed wholly wrapped up in God. She died shortly after having received holy communion, in the act of kissing the crucifix, which had never left her hands since her conversion.

May the account of this conversion encourage others to persevere in praying to the Sacred Heart for those whose case seems hopeless.

83.—Innocence Established before a Court of Justice.

This is probably the first time you have received any account of a favor from North Australia, and I am sure it will not be less welcome for that reason. A sailor, a creole, whilst trying to defend himself against a man who had shot him in the arm, was accused by his enemy of trying to hit his head with an ax. The poor fellow, on reaching the police station in order to lodge a complaint against his aggressor, was, to his great surprise, arrested and put in prison. I used frequently to visit him whilst he was there, and even took him holy communion. It must be acknowledged he was

placed in a most serious situation, for his accuser had many friends, who would not have hesitated a moment to take a false oath to serve their purposes. I therefore advised him to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, with a promise, if set free, of publication in *The Messenger*. To this he consented and moreover promised to burn a pound of wax candles before the picture of the Sacred Heart in our chapel. On the day of the trial the plaintiff could prove nothing against the defendant, as his friends had already gone to Kurraday Island, and the creole was in consequence released.

84.—The Sacred Heart the Ruler of Hearts.

I have, thanks to the Sacred Heart, been delivered from a most painful position. A short time ago I

was summoned to appear in court as witness at a trial, which was to take place on the 22d of September. I have, under any circumstances, a great objection to take an oath, and the more so in this case, knowing the evidence I had to give was only circumstantial, and that it could throw no light on the matter. Not knowing how to act, I determined to ask the Sacred Heart to help me, through the intercession of Our Lady and St. Joseph, promising to make a novena and to have a Mass said, if my evidence was not required. Thanks to the Sacred Heart, I was not wanted at the court.

85.—Two Tigers Transformed to Lambs.

I.

Not long ago a poor woman complained to me that her husband had become a drunkard, and that when he

came home intoxicated he not only cursed and swore, but beat her cruelly. I advised her to have recourse to the Sacred Heart, and the result was that twelve days later the man fell ill, sent for me, and made a general confession. Before receiving the last sacraments, he begged his wife's pardon. During the twelve days he still lived he was so completely changed that all those present at his death were filled with admiration.

II.

A man, after squandering all his wealth on a worthless woman, deserted his wife and children. The poor wife dearly loved her husband, and was heartbroken at his desertion. I did my best to console her, and advised her to join the arch-confraternity of the Sacred Heart and to pray daily with her children for their father's conversion. Some time afterwards she was in-

formed of the place where her husband was staying, and also that he was dying of consumption. I advised her to go and see him. She did so, travelling night and day. As soon as the wife entered the sick man's room, he burst into tears and humbly begged forgiveness. She remained with him to the end, and had the consolation of seeing him receive the last sacraments, and die truly repentant.

86.—Glad to Leave the World to Enter the Cloister.

A young lady only nineteen years of age had long felt she was called to embrace the religious life, and her confessor, after convincing himself she was not mistaken, strongly advised her to enter a house where the rule was milder than the one she had chosen. She, therefore, desired to become a Sister of Charity, and the priest

wrote to the Sister Superior and strongly recommended his penitent to her. Many obstacles were in her way, but she was so earnest in her vocation that at once, after obtaining her parents' consent, she started for her new home. In less than a fortnight she was admitted as a postulant, and soon afterwards intrusted with the surgical ward of the hospital. The fatigue of such a post proved too much for her, and twice she fell ill. Two months before her clothing, her former confessor received a letter from the Sister Superior, informing him that, much as she regretted it, it was impossible for her to keep the young lady any longer, as she had become insane, and begging of him to ask her mother to come and take her home at once. About a week after her return he called to see her, but could discover no signs of insanity. It is true she was greatly depressed, owing to being

obliged to leave the convent, and very weak, the result of overwork. He therefore said all he could to encourage her, and advised her to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, as he felt sure that if it was God's will for her to be a nun she would be one. He was right. Contrary to human expectations, she was admitted a few months after leaving the Sisters, into another community of the same Order, where she is now a professed nun.

87.—*The Bell and the Organ.*

A parish priest gives the following account of how he wished the little bell of his church to be replaced by a larger one. How was he to get it? He did not dare mention it to any of his parishioners, as that meant money out of their pockets. Humanly speaking, there was not the remotest chance

of his wish being fulfilled. There was no harm, however, in trying to interest St. Joseph, our dear Lady, and above all, the Sacred Heart, in the matter. He therefore made known his wish to them, and promised if the bell was forthcoming it should be consecrated to the Sacred Heart, and its representation engraved on it.

He had nothing to do now but to wait patiently. The Sacred Heart had heard his prayer, and soon inspired some of his parishioners with the desire to have a new bell. The priest's consent being obtained in favor of the plan, sufficient money was soon collected to pay for the bell, which was rung for the first time on the feast of Corpus Christi. The inscription: "Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us," together with a figure of the Sacred Heart, was engraved on it.

In 1882 our Reverend Mother Superior ordered an organ, which

was to cost several hundred florins. It was sent, but owing to a dispute between the manager and directors of the firm, we could get no one to put it up. The workmen in our place could not do so, as they knew nothing of organ building. There was the organ doing nothing, and of no use. Our mother, with her usual childlike confidence in the Sacred Heart, proposed to us to make a novena to the Sacred Heart, and made a promise of publication in *The Messenger*. At the end of nine days our Reverend Mother wrote to an organ builder she had heard of, who was willing to put it up for three hundred florins, half of which the directors of the firm from whom the organ was purchased consented to pay.

88.—Thanks and Petition from Brazil.

A short time ago, after my wife's recovery from a severe illness, she fell ill with a low fever, which so completely prostrated her that the doctors declared her case hopeless. The loss of my wife would under any consideration have been a sad blow to me, but situated as I was, would have been peculiarly painful. A colonist's life is generally a hard one, especially at the commencement, and here I was with a family of young children, and worse still, a baby in arms. I had often heard of the wonders the Sacred Heart works, and I determined in my present distress to call on it for help, with a promise, if my petition was granted, to have the fact published in *The Messenger*. Thank God, the Sacred Heart did hear me! My dear

wife is once more in her usual health and able to resume her duties, thanks to this Divine Heart.

89.--Bread and Employment Found.

Since I became a Catholic and a member of the Apostleship of Prayer I have never failed to experience the powerful protection of this Divine Heart. Since I came here I have found great difficulty in getting permanent work, for no one would remain in the same workshop with the Catholic dog, as they called me. A short time ago, finding I would soon be out of employment and knowing I had a wife and nine hungry mouths to feed, I at once began a novena to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. Anthony of Padua. My present employer, a rich Jew, called on me a few days ago, asking me if I would object to do work for him

in my own home, as his men refused to work with me. The offer was gladly accepted. I have just returned to the shop, having been appointed overseer of the men.

90.—When Man's Work Ends and God's Begins.

In 1884 I was taken dangerously ill of typhus fever, and besides my two doctors, had a brother of St. Vincent de Paul to nurse me. At first the fever was not very high, but I was suddenly seized with cramps in the throat, threatening me with suffocation. Knowing I was seriously ill, I asked to receive the last sacraments, and I had been no sooner anointed than, to the astonishment of everybody, the cramps left me. As I was not yet out of danger, my wife and friends at once began a novena to the Sacred Heart, with the promise of

publication in *The Messenger* if I recovered. On the Sunday after the feast of the Assumption, feeling very ill, I called my wife to my bedside to take leave of her, and made her promise to see that our only child became a good Catholic. My recommendations to her were barely finished before every sign of approaching dissolution appeared on my face, and the Brother of Charity at once began the prayers for the dying. Suddenly a change for the better took place, and I am on a fair way to recovery, much to the astonishment of my doctors. One of them, a European celebrity, declared he had only twice before met with such a malignant case of typhus as mine.

**91.—A Statue of the Sacred Heart Ob-
tained for a Church through
Sickness.**

I had for a long time wished to see a statue of the Sacred Heart placed in our parish church, in order that the Divine Heart of our dear Lord might be honored as it is in so many other churches, but I put off making the purchase. Some time last year my sister fell ill, and was given over by her doctors. On the first Friday of the month, the malady reached its climax, and in my distress at the thought of losing one so dear to me as my sister, I promised not only to buy a statue of the Sacred Heart for our church, but also to publish the favor in *The Messenger* if she recovered, and I made a novena to the Divine Heart for this intention. Three days after the promise there was a slight improvement in our dear in-

valid's health, which is steadily continuing, and we have every hope that, thanks to our dear Lord, she will be spared to us.

92.—Reputation of a Family Saved.

Our family was suddenly plunged into the deepest distress, our mother having been summoned to appear in court on a charge of perjury. Convinced of her innocence, we at once had recourse to the Sacred Heart, Our Lady and St. Joseph, and promised if she was acquitted, publication in *The Messenger*. On the day of the trial the evidence of the witnesses was so contradictory that our mother was at once declared innocent by the judge and jury.

93.—All's Well that Ends Well.

Our dear father, whom I have so often recommended to the prayers of the readers of *The Messenger*, is at last gone to his eternal rest. There is nothing extraordinary in the conversion itself, but the incidents attending it are another proof of the love of the Sacred Heart. As soon as he knew his case was hopeless, the thought of the terrible judgment awaiting the impenitent filled him with terror, and he asked to see a priest, mentioning the superior of a Capuchin monastery at R——, from whose hands he wished to receive the last sacraments. This gentleman had left home shortly after my father's illness and was not expected back for some time. We, however, sent to make inquiries at the monastery, and were informed he had just returned. He must indeed have been inspired to come home sooner,

for he himself told us that the evening my father asked to see a priest, although he knew nothing of my dear parent's illness, he felt he was wanted at home, and his friends could not persuade him to remain any longer with them.

94.—The Serpent Conquered.

A dear friend of mine had strong doubts about the choice he had made relative to his future career. In his childhood and boyhood he had desired to become a priest, consequently his studies had been directed towards that end. The arch-enemy of mankind did all in his power to make him believe that, apart even from his unworthiness for the office, he would never be able to bear the burden and life of self-sacrifice of the priest. The youth, in his distress, mentioned his fears to me, and I at once advised him

to have recourse to the Sacred Heart, who would be sure to help him, and to promise publication in *The Messenger* if his petition was granted. He faithfully made the novena, and, thanks to the Sacred Heart, another officer is gained for the army of our dear Lord.

95.—Thanksgiving from Bosnia.

A mother had, with the consent of her little child, made a vow to educate him for the priesthood if he recovered from a severe illness. From that time he never thought of anything else. When he was old enough to go to college, being anxious to become a Jesuit, he made an application to be admitted to the college kept by them, where twelve pupils desirous of becoming priests were received gratuitously. That year the number of candidates presenting themselves to the Jesuits far exceeded the fixed number, and it

was agreed by the Fathers that the election of pupils should take place by vote on the first of September.

In the meantime the poor boy, thinking he was unworthy to become a Jesuit, was sorely troubled. His mother, seeing nothing could arouse him from the state of despondency into which he had fallen, consulted a Sister of Charity living in the neighborhood as to what had best be done. The good Sister strongly advised her to have recourse to the Sacred Heart, with promise of publication in *The Messenger* if her petition was granted. The mother on her return home told her son the advice she had received, and then knelt with him before the picture of the Sacred Heart, which had the place of honor in her parlor. Her first prayer was to ask our dear Lord the grace never to commit a deliberate grievous sin; her second, that her boy might become a priest, and, above all,

a Jesuit. About an hour after this generous gift of her child to the Sacred Heart, a messenger came to her house from the college, saying the boy was wanted. On hearing the good news that he was one of the fortunate candidates elected, his thoughts at once turned to the Sacred Heart and to his mother, who had so nobly given him back to God.

96.—Delivered from Persecution.

For years the nuns residing at —— were cruelly persecuted by a gentleman holding a high official position in their town. Prayers, remonstrances, nothing could touch him, and he never missed an opportunity of thwarting their good works. Last year, after reading *The Messenger*, they resolved to make a novena, asking Our Lady to join in imploring the Sacred Heart to put an end to the persecution. These

good nuns also promised, in spite of their extreme poverty, to have a lamp burning perpetually before the statue of the Sacred Heart in their chapel, and publication in *The Messenger* if this fresh grace was obtained. During the novena lamps were constantly burning before the statues of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Dolors. On the very day the novena ended the gentleman in question tendered his resignation, which was accepted by the magistrates.

97.—*Mercy of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial.*

The account of the following interesting conversion was sent to a French paper in 1879: "My dear mother had placed over the statue of Our Lady in our sitting-room a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart, before which she would make us, when we were chil-

dren, say our morning and night prayers. She never failed to say to us 'Jesus sees you, and if you are not good He will drive you out of His Sacred Heart.' On the day of my first communion, after my night prayers, she placed me under the protection of the Sacred Heart, and made me promise to be true to it. Shortly afterwards I was forced to leave her, and it is only my love for this Divine Heart and for her dear memory that induces me to relate what follows—whilst urging others to fly from the reading of bad books as the greatest misfortune that can befall them. This reading was my ruin, and at the age of twenty I was a disgrace to my family and to the name I bore. I dare not think, without trembling and being filled with horror, of the life of sin I led during these last thirty years, and I wonder that the earth did not open to swallow such a monster of iniquity.

Whilst still young, I became a soldier, and on account of my bad conduct was sent to Africa, where I remained till forced by necessity to return home, a wanderer and a beggar.

“I found it impossible to get employment. One day, while on the tramp, I arrived at Paray-le-Monial. The streets were beautifully decorated with triumphal arches, banners and flowers, while the windows were filled with lighted lamps. Turning to a poor woman, I asked the cause of all this rejoicing. ‘What?’ she replied, ‘do you not know we are going to have a grand procession?’

“ ‘What! a procession?’

“ ‘Yes; in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.’

“ ‘The Heart of Jesus; can we see it?’ I asked, with a sneer.

“ ‘You know very well we cannot see it,’ she replied, ‘but our dear Lord

ordered Blessed Margaret Mary to publish this devotion.'

"I will not relate all I did to annoy the people wearing the badge of the Sacred Heart. Once only I felt a slight pang of remorse, when a band of young men passed by me carrying a banner on which was the following inscription: 'Have pity on those who offend Thee, for they know not what they do; let the seal of Christ which was once indelibly stamped upon them reappear.' On reaching the convent of the Visitation of the Sacred Heart, which was thronged with pious worshippers, and whilst waiting for an opportunity to enter the chapel, I noticed a large board, covered with white linen, on which was written in red letters the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary by our dear Lord. All these were mere empty words to me, for I was so blinded by sin that the words grace, perfection, and mercy had

no significance for me. One promise alone struck me: 'I will give priests a peculiar facility for converting the most hardened sinner.' 'Now,' said I to myself, in my self-sufficiency, 'I will prove the falseness of these promises, and we will see who is right or who is wrong;' and I laughed inwardly with a fiendish delight at the thought of my anticipated success. At that moment a nun passed by, and I told her I wanted to speak to a priest, one belonging to Paray-le-Monial itself. She showed me into a little room, the whitewashed walls of which were covered with inscriptions, to which I paid no attention. The priest did not keep me waiting long. At first we stood facing each other without uttering a word. My face told him quite clearly with what sort he had to deal—nothing less than a scoffer, a fiend.

" 'Friend,' said he, gently, 'what do you want?'

“In spite of myself I felt an inward thrill, but his words had broken the ice, and in a scoffing tone I said: ‘Do not call me by the name of friend—you do not know to whom you are speaking. Call me by any other name but that—an unbeliever, a heathen, for I do not believe a word of what you say or write,’ I continued, heaping insult on insult. I watched him closely, for in spite of myself my thoughts reverted to what I had seen written on the board, and I said to myself: ‘Well, well, we will see what he will say to all this.’ He had become very pale, but did not show the slightest sign of impatience at my cruel words. He only asked me questions without heeding my insults. I inwardly chuckled at my cleverness, for I felt convinced mine was the victory, and I was on the point of telling him so, when suddenly, turning to me, he said: ‘Friend, have you still a mother?’ Oh, my

Jesus, the hour of the triumph of Thy Sacred Heart was come! At the mention of the name of my mother, my stony heart was touched, tears ran down my face, I trembled all over. 'My mother!—you speak to me of my mother! Ah, it is true what she used to tell us about the Sacred Heart of Jesus! I see the picture of the Sacred Heart before which I knelt in my innocence, as a little child, by that mother's side.' I read to him the last words she wrote to me when dying, and which I heeded not: 'My child, I am writing to you on my death-bed; your conduct has broken my heart. I do not curse you, but will pray till my last breath that the Sacred Heart may have pity on you and convert you.' 'Listen, Father,' I continued, 'at the entrance to the chapel I had seen this inscription: "I will give priests a special facility for converting the most hardened souls." I did not believe a

word of it, and I asked to see you merely to hear what you would say, and to turn you into ridicule. My conversion is another victory for the Sacred Heart.' The priest had fallen on his knees, quite overcome with emotion, and was thanking that Divine Heart. I, filled with remorse, begged to be allowed to make my confession to God's representative. This I did, in the chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart, and a few days afterwards I had the happiness of receiving holy communion. May this account of the conversion of a notorious sinner encourage priests to recommend the most hopeless exiles to the Sacred Heart, and mothers who are grieving over their erring children to have recourse to this Sacred Heart, for it cannot fail to hear their prayers."



PART IV.

DEVOTIONS TO THE SACRED HEART.

98.—The First Friday of the Month.

IT was the special desire of Our Lord Jesus Christ, revealed to Blessed Margaret Mary, that the first Friday of each month be consecrated to the devotion to and adoration of His most Sacred Heart. In order to better prepare for it, it would be well to read, the evening before, some book treating of this devotion, or of the Passion of Our Lord, and to make a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament. On the day itself we should, on awaking, offer and consecrate ourselves, with all our

thoughts, words, and actions, to Jesus, that His Sacred Heart may be thereby honored and glorified. We should visit some church as early as possible; and as we kneel before Jesus, truly present in the tabernacle, let us endeavor to awaken in our soul a deep sorrow at the thought of the innumerable offences continually heaped upon His most Sacred Heart in this sacrament of His love; and surely we cannot find this difficult, if we have the least degree of love for Jesus. Should we, however, find our love to be cold or lukewarm, let us consider earnestly the many reasons we have for giving our hearts to Jesus. After this we must acknowledge with sorrow the faults of which we have been guilty through our want of respect in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, or through our negligence in visiting and receiving Our Lord in holy communion.

The communion of this day should

be offered by the adorers of the Sacred Heart with the intention of making some satisfaction for all the ingratitude which Jesus receives in the Most Holy Sacrament, and the same spirit should animate all our actions during the day.

As the object of this devotion is to inflame our hearts with an ardent love for Jesus, and to repair thereby, as far as lies in our power, all the outrages which are daily committed against the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, it is evident that these exercises are not confined to any particular day. Jesus is equally deserving of our love at all times; and as this most loving Saviour is daily and hourly loaded with insults and cruelly treated by His creatures, it is but just that we should strive each day to make all the reparation in our power. Those, therefore, who are prevented from practicing this devotion on the first Friday can do so on any other day during the month. In

the same manner, they may offer the first communion of each month for this intention, consecrating the whole day to the honor and glory of the Sacred Heart, and performing in the same spirit all the pious exercises they were unable to accomplish on the first Friday.

Moreover, Our Lord suggested another feature in this consoling devotion of the first Friday, by the faithful practice of which He led Blessed Margaret Mary to expect the grace of final perseverance, and that of receiving the sacraments of the Church before dying, in favor of those who should observe it. This was to make a novena of communions in honor of the Sacred Heart on the first Friday of the month for nine successive months.

99.—The Month of the Sacred Heart.

Pope Pius IX. granted, May 8, 1873, an indulgence of seven years each day, to all the faithful who, with a contrite heart, say daily during the month of June, either in public or in private, some special prayers, or perform some pious acts in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; and a plenary indulgence on any one day of the same month, to those who, after confession and communion, visit some church or public oratory, and pray there for the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff.

By this practice the devout worshippers of the Sacred Heart are invited to consecrate the month of June especially to this Divine Heart. They may do this in the following manner:

INTERIOR PRACTICES.

1. At the beginning of this month examine yourself, and see what is

your predominant passion, or the fault which you most frequently commit, and the best means of overcoming it. Having discovered this fault, make a firm purpose to use the means to overcome it, commending your resolution with a childlike confidence to the Sacred Heart. Choose some short ejaculatory prayer which you will repeat often each day during the month, in order to remind you of your resolution, and to implore the grace of God to help you to fulfil it.

2. Each morning offer all the actions of the day to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and renew the resolution you took at the beginning of the month, humbly praying for grace to keep it during the day.

3. Take for your subject of meditation the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for which end the consideration of its many virtues and attributes is recommended.

4. Make the resolution made at the beginning of the month the subject of your particular examination of conscience morning and evening, thanking the Sacred Heart for the good you may have done, and begging pardon for the faults you have committed.

EXTERIOR PRACTICES.

1. In a convenient situation place a picture or statue, suitably adorned, of the Sacred Heart; for Our Lord has promised to bless the houses in which a representation of His Heart is set up for honor.

2. Recite every day a special prayer in honor of the Sacred Heart. Be particular to repeat often during the day some ejaculation.

3. Endeavor to assist at holy Mass every day, and if you possibly can, make a visit every evening to your divine Saviour in the sacrament of His love.

4. Endeavor with prudence and discretion to lead and encourage others to honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This may often be done by the distribution of books, pictures, prayers, medals, etc.

100.—Feast of the Sacred Heart.

The feast of the Sacred Heart is the feast of the love of Jesus towards men. The intention of Our Lord in instituting this feast was to move our cold hearts to love Him. In order to more easily obtain this end, He offers us for the object of our devotion His Divine Heart—that Heart which gave the most evident proof of love for us. This day should therefore be consecrated in a special manner to the adoration of this most Sacred Heart, bearing in mind the intention which is the object of this devotion, namely, to make some return for the

love which Jesus bears to us, by giving Him all the affection of our heart, and by making every reparation and satisfaction in our power, for the ingratitude of mankind towards a God so infinitely worthy of all love, and who, notwithstanding, is loved by so few of His creatures.

In the morning, therefore, offer your heart and your whole being as a holocaust to the Heart of Jesus, and renew this offering often during the day, which ought to be entirely consecrated, in silence and recollection, to the love of your Saviour. Strive to perform all your actions in the spirit which should animate this feast. Let your visits to the Blessed Sacrament be frequent, and remain in conversation with Jesus as long as your health and the duties of your state of life permit you. Prepare your heart with diligent care to receive Jesus worthily in holy communion, and offer your communion to God the

Father in satisfaction for the unworthy communions of so many Christians, testifying at the same time your gratitude and love to Jesus.

If during your spiritual exercises of this day you should feel cold and insensible, beware of shortening your devotions for this reason. For were you to do so, you would be in danger of letting this day, so rich in blessings, pass by without drawing any advantage from it. Go, then, courageously to work, and do everything in the same manner as you would do were you full of interior joy and consolation.

Pope Pius VIII. granted, July 7, 1815, a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who, having confessed and communicated worthily, visit a church or public oratory, and pray for the intentions of the Pope on this feast.

101.—A Novena to the Sacred Heart.

It was the wish of our divine Lord that His disciples should remain in prayer and in seclusion for nine days previous to the descent of the Holy Ghost, in order the better to prepare their hearts for the coming of this heavenly Comforter. Hence the Church continues to set apart nine days, to be spent in more fervent prayer and special devotions, as a preparation for the greater feasts, and also when she seeks to obtain any extraordinary favor from God. It is therefore the custom of all devout adorers of the Sacred Heart to make a novena in preparation for the feast of this Divine Heart, which is celebrated, usually, on the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi.

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